UVIC - McPHERSON
3 2775 90309316 8

STUDIES IN THE
MAKING OF CITIZENS

CIVIC TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND

A STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC LIFE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, CHICAGO
THE BAKER & TAYLOR CO., NEW YORK; THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, LONDON; THE MARUZEN-KABUSHIKI-KAISHA, TOKYO, OSAKA, KYOTO, FUKUOKA, SENDAI; THE COMMERCIAL PRESS, LIMITED, SHANGHAI

CIVIC TRAINING IN SWITZERLAND

A STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC LIFE

By ROBERT CLARKSON BROOKS
Joseph Wharton Professor of Political Science
Swarthmore College

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO · ILLINOIS

DQ36
B7

COPYRIGHT 1930 BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. PUBLISHED AUGUST 1930

COMPOSED AND PRINTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, U.S.A.

TO

E. H. B.

COMRADE OF MANY HAPPY DAYS IN
GENEVA, LUZERN, BERN, ZÜRICH, LA CHIÈSAZ,
SCHWYZ, EGLISAU, LOCARNO,
SILS MARIA

"But after all, the most interesting lesson it [Switzerland] teaches is how traditions and institutions, taken together, may develop in the average man, to an extent never reached before, the qualities that make a good citizen—shrewdness, moderation, common sense and a sense of duty to the community. It is because this has come to pass in Switzerland that democracy is there more truly democratic than in any other country."

—JAMES BRYCE, *Modern Democracies*, II, 449

EDITOR'S PREFACE

This study of civic education is one of a series of similar analyses in a variety of states. Broadly speaking, the common purpose of these inquiries has been that of examining objectively the systems of civic cohesion in a group of states, of determining the broad trends of civic training in these modern nations, and of indicating possibilities in the further development and control of civic education. In two of these cases, Italy and Russia, striking experiments are now being made in the organization of new types of civic loyalty. Germany, England, the United States, and France present instances of powerful modern states and the development of types of civic cohesion. Switzerland and Austria-Hungary are employed as examples of the difficulty experienced in reconciling a central political allegiance with divergent and conflicting racial and religious elements.

The series includes volumes on the following subjects:

Soviet Russia, by Samuel N. Harper, Professor of Russian Language and Institutions in the University of Chicago.

Great Britain, by John M. Gaus, Professor of Political Science, University of Wisconsin.

Austria-Hungary, by Oscar Jászi, formerly of Budapest University, now Professor of Political Science in Oberlin College.

The United States, by Carl Brinkmann, Professor of Political Economy in the University of Heidelberg.

Italy, by Herbert W. Schneider, Professor of Philosophy in Columbia University, and Shepherd B. Clough, of Columbia University.

Germany, by Dr. Paul Kosok, New York City.

Switzerland, by Robert C. Brooks, Professor of Political Science in Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

France, by Carleton J. H. Hayes, Professor of History in Columbia University. (This is a part of the Columbia University series of "Studies in Post-War France" and is included here because of its intimate relation to the other volumes in the series.)

Civic Attitudes in American School Textbooks, by Bessie L. Pierce, Associate Professor of History in the University of Chicago.

The Duk-Duks, by Elizabeth Weber, Instructor of Political Science, Hunter College, New York City. ?

Comparative Civic Education, by Charles E. Merriam, Professor of Political Science in the University of Chicago.

Wide latitude has been given and taken by the individual collaborators in this study, with the understanding, however, (1) that as a minimum there would be included in each volume an examination of the social bases of political cohesion and (2) that the various mechanisms of civic education would be adequately discussed. There is inevitably a wide variation in point of view, method of approach, and in execution of the project. Investigators differ widely in aptitude, experience, and environment.

Of the various investigators the question may be asked: What part do the social groupings play in the spirit of the state? What is the attitude of the economic groups which for this purpose may be considered under certain large heads, as the attitude of the business element, of the agricultural group, or of labor? What is the relation of the racial groups toward the political group whose solidarity is in question? Do they tend to integrate or disintegrate the state? What is the position of the religious factors in the given society, the Catholic, the Protestant, the Jewish? How are they concerned in loyalty toward the political unit? What is the place of the regional groupings in the political unit? Do they develop special tendencies alone or in company with the other types of groupings already mentioned? What is the relation of these competing loyalties to each other?

It cannot be assumed that any of these groups have a special attraction or aversion toward government in general; and the analysis is not conducted with any view of establishing a uniformity of interest or attachment in any type of group, but rather of indicating the social composition of the existing political units and authorities. It may well be questioned whether there is any abstract loyalty, political or otherwise. These political loyalties are determined by concrete interests, modified by survivals that no longer fit the case and by aspirations not yet realized. The cohesion is a resultant of conflicting forces, or a balance of existing counterweights, a factor of the situation. All these factors may change and the balance may be the same, or one may change slightly and the whole balance may be overthrown. It is the integration of interests that counts, not the special form or character of any one of them.

Among the mechanisms of civic education which it is hoped to analyze are the schools, the rôle of governmental services and officials, the place of the political parties, and the function of special patriotic organizations; or, from another point of view, the use of traditions in building up civic cohesion, the place of political symbolism, the relation of language, literature, and the press to civic education, the position occupied by locality in the construction of a political loyalty; and, finally, it is hoped that an effective analysis may be made of competing group loyalties rivaling the state either within or without.

In these groups there is much overlapping. It would be possible to apply any one or all of the last-named categories to any or all of the first. Thus the formal school system may and does utilize language and literature, or symbolism, or love of locality, or make use of important traditions. Symbolism and traditions may and do overlap—in fact, *must* if they are to serve their purpose; while love of locality and language may be and are interwoven most intimately.

Intricate and difficult of comprehension as some of these patterns are, they lie at the basis of power; and control systems, however crude, must constantly be employed and invented to deal with these situations. The device may be as simple as an ancient symbol or as complicated as a formal system of school training, but in one form or other these mechanisms of cohesion are constantly maintained.

In the various states examined, these devices will be traced and compared. The result will by no means attain the dignity of exact measurement but will supply a rough tracing of outlines of types and patterns in different countries. It is hoped, however, that these outlines will be sufficiently clear to set forth some of the main situations arising in the process of political control and to raise important questions regarding further development of civic education.

It may be suggested that the process by which political cohesion is produced must always be considered with reference to other loyalties toward other groups in the same society. Many of the devices here described are common to a number of competing groups and can be more clearly seen in their relation to each other, working in co-operation or competition, as the situation may be. The attitude of the ecclesiastical group or the economic group, or the racial or cultural group, or any of them, profoundly influences the nature and effect of the state's attempt to solidify political loyalty; and the picture is complete only when all the concurrent or relevant factors are envisaged.

These devices are not always consciously employed although they are spoken of here as if they were. It often happens that these instrumentalities are used without the conscious plan of anyone in authority. In this sense it might be better to say that these techniques are found rather than willed. At any rate, they exist and are operating.

These eight or nine techniques are only rough schedules or classifications of broad types of cohesive influences. They are not presented as accurate analyses of the psychology of learning or teaching the cohesive process of political adherence. They presuppose an analysis of objectives which has not been made, and they presuppose an orderly study of the means of applying objectives; and this also has not been worked out in any of the states under consideration.

Professor Robert C. Brooks, who contributes the present volume on *Civic Training in Switzerland*, has been for many years a student of the Swiss people and their political institutions. He has spent several extended periods of residence in that country, beginning in 1899. The fruits of his earlier studies have appeared in a book published in 1918 under the title: *Government and Politics of Switzerland*, and also in the form of numerous articles contributed to encyclopedias and works of reference, to the *American Political Science Review* and other magazines. To lay a foundation for the present work, Professor Brooks spent several months in Switzerland during 1927, making his headquarters at Geneva, Bern, and Zürich, and traveling extensively in those portions of the country which he had not visited previously. Every facility was afforded him by officials, both civil and military, and by private citizens of all walks of life, in the way of access to archives and libraries, to collections, museums, and institutions of the most varied kinds, to party diets and political assemblages, large and small; most generously also they gave of their time and wealth of experience in answering questions and supplying necessary data. As the subtitle chosen by Professor Brooks indicates, he was impressed particularly by the essential democracy of the Swiss view of life, a *Lebensanschauung* which is manifest throughout in their methods of civic training. For that reason it is hoped that the present study may be of unusual interest to citizens of other larger democratic states, most of all perhaps in the United States.

This volume presents a striking contrast to the study of Austria-Hungary by Professor Jászi, in which another combination of races, religions, and regions was analyzed and interpreted.

Charles E. Merriam

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In all frankness the author of the present volume must disclaim credit for its main purposes and scope. As the preface by the editor, Professor Charles E. Merriam, points out, these were virtually determined in advance for the whole series of "Studies in the Making of Citizens." On the other hand, it is quite true that, within the general plan conceived for the series, the various writers were left entirely free to follow their own devices and to formulate their own conclusions—a liberty of which full use has been made in the present work. Nevertheless, shortly after completing his preliminary survey, the author reached the conclusion that no better outline for the analysis of civic training in Switzerland could be devised than that which had been supplied him in advance; accordingly, he adhered to it throughout with the exception of a few expansions and still fewer contractions made advisable by conditions peculiar to the country with which he had to deal. It is, therefore, his first duty to acknowledge his great indebtedness to Professor Merriam not only for the extremely valuable general plan suggested by the latter but also for innumerable kindly suggestions and aids which greatly facilitated the execution of the work.

With main purposes and scope determined in advance, but two variables remain to be considered: first, the idiosyncracies of the writer; second, the peculiarities of his subject.

Regarding the first of these, the author confesses that he has long been of the opinion that whenever a national of one country undertakes to describe the institutions of another, he should first submit himself to something in the nature of a severe and searching political psychoanalysis, the results to be presented in a special preface and made "required reading"—to quote an undergraduate term—before permitting the perusal of his book. "*Du siehst was du bringst*," as the German proverb has it; hence the importance of knowing what views, predilections, and prejudices the observer brings with him, whether or not he is conscious of their existence. However, the technique of political psychoanalysis remains to be worked out, to the great relief, be it admitted, of the present writer, who therefore advances the idea solely for application to his successors in this rapidly expanding field of literature, thus contributing to the benefit of posterity in general.

To a degree, also, it is undoubtedly true that no one can describe at length the government of a nation other than his own without revealing repeatedly the traits of his own mental makeup, and thus in the end painting his own portrait. Montesquieu's abhorrence of despotism, for example, lurks behind every line of the *Esprit des Lois.* James Bryce, for another, failed to signalize the fact that he was a Scotchman, a Presbyterian, and a Liberal in the Preface to his *American Commonwealth*—all three traits which obviously stood him in good stead when he made his famous study of the United States. If he had been an Englishman, a Tory, and a High Churchman, he would have been at a great disadvantage; needless to say, also, the resultant book would have been of very different character. Certainly it would have been far less popular on this side of the Atlantic.

Although the author is conscious that such free rein has been given to his idiosyncracies at various points that no reader can mistake their nature, he feels obligated nevertheless to a certain measure of confession. To begin with, he admits a prejudice, unpardonable perhaps in a professor of political science, in favor of democracy. Dictators, dead or alive, either make him laugh or bore him to tears. Finding this trait writ large among the Swiss naturally convinced him that they were a very wise and perspicacious people. It was the author's predilection for democracy, no doubt, that even in his student days led him to look at the Swiss with unusual curiosity, then to settle down to intensive study of them, and, finally, to become their firm friend and admirer. Perhaps he paints too roseate a picture at times of their affairs; on the other hand, he hopes that his sympathy with them is not so great as to blind him to occasional faults. Frequently the Swiss themselves are not a little surprised by the friendly opinions expressed by many foreigners regarding their political methods; given an essentially democratic viewpoint on the part of observers, however, such a result is inevitable.

Secondly, although he knows it is no longer fashionable, the author confesses that he inclines to the Jeffersonian rather than to the Hamiltonian political philosophy. Hence, of course, his keen interest in the Swiss town meeting and Landsgemeinde, in cantonal autonomy and states' rights sentiment, in the devotion to personal liberty and in the diversity of languages, confessions, and customs which the Swiss are so obviously and so obstinately determined to maintain. Admitted that these peculiarities are sadly inefficient from the point of view of mass production, nevertheless they possess a charm and add a spice to life which one misses in the great centralized states of the world.

Thirdly, he admits that he is a pacifist and a pedagogue, but denies that he is either a Prohibitionist or a Fundamentalist. Not so much of a pacifist, however, that he escaped being tremendously impressed by the Swiss army system as an instrument of civic training. But certainly so much of a pedagogue that he could not fail to feel ardent affection for a people whose approach to all the problems of life is essentially educational, whose political parties even conduct schools for the training of leaders, whose greatest statesman, in the truest sense of that word, was Pestalozzi. As to the dry régime alleged to exist in the United States, let it be said at once that the author's opposition thereto is of the philosophical variety, confined to strictly constitutional modes of expression. Yet in spite of a vote on the losing side in the presidential election of 1928, he admits that the present inundation of Switzerland by schnapps impresses him as deplorable, although not sufficiently so to warrant prohibition as a remedy. Finally, while seldom an attendant upon Fundamentalist church services, he sometimes participates in Friends' Meetings, usually emerging therefrom with the conviction that if one were to explain the extremely democratic processes practiced therein and known as "taking the sense of the meeting" to the Swiss, a most surprising development of Quakerism would immediately take place among them. On the other hand, a more or less irrational love of ritualism and a professional respect for thoroughgoing political organization explain the author's frankly admitted admiration for the Catholic church and the Catholic Conservative party in Switzerland. Nevertheless, he felt compelled to make certain observations regarding life in the cantons dominated by clerical influence which will probably be resented exactly in proportion to their accuracy.

Now as to the peculiarities of his subject—Swiss politics, particularly in relation to civic training. Really there aren't any; which may be only another way of saying that the crankisms of the author coincide in the main with the crankisms of the people he describes. Nevertheless, certain facts of an objective character are worth mention. In the first place, there is nothing abnormal—perhaps "unusual" would be the better word—in the present condition of politics in Switzerland, as there is in the Russia described by Professor Harper, or in the Italy described by Professors Schneider and Clough. The institutions that now exist in Switzerland are not sudden innovations nor forced fruits of hothouse theories; rather they are products of a long period of peaceful evolution, tested by experience, justified by results. To be sure, there are modern developments along many lines which are given special attention in the text, but upon examination all such developments will be found to be related organically to the historic background. Switzerland has enjoyed peace with the outside world for more than a century. It held fast to its secular tradition of neutrality during the perilous years 1914–18, emerging in the end with its political system intact, but not, however, without having suffered serious strains and stresses. One of these which caused the gravest apprehension at the time—the threatened split along sectional language lines early in the course of the World War—has been completely overcome. Similarly the revolutionary general strike of 1918 was put down promptly and with a minimum of violence. Nevertheless, the shortage of coal, iron, and food and the stoppage of commerce from 1914 to 1918, particularly of the tourist traffic, were severely felt, while the burden of mobilization to guard the frontiers rolled up a total of national indebtedness undreamed of before the war. Subsequently, however, the Swiss have been hard at work showing the indomitable pluck and energy characteristic of their breed, with the result that before the present book was undertaken not only had "normalcy" been restored but a considerable degree of progress had been achieved, e.g., introduction of proportional representation for the election of the National Council, 1918; entry into the League of Nations, 1920; submission of treaties to popular vote, 1921; rejection of the capital tax levy, 1922; and the acceptance of various important amendments dealing with labor and social insurance—all adopted by the democratic processes of direct legislation. It is obvious, therefore, that the methods of civic training described in the following pages are not ephemeral novelties but rather well tried devices closely integrated with the mechanisms of a stable and going governmental concern.

At first the nomenclature of the Swiss federal system is somewhat confusing, due partly to the use of the word "council" in designating both legislative and executive organs. For the benefit of readers not yet familiar with the subject it may be well to present a brief glossary. The bi-cameral federal legislature is known collectively or when the two houses sit together, which they do for certain purposes, as the Federal Assembly (Bundesversammlung, Assemblée fédérale). Its less numerous branch in which the cantons are represented equally is called the Council of States (Ständerat, Conseil des États). Following the American analogy, one is tempted to translate it as "Senate," but that would be a solecism since the body in question has no special powers and in influence is distinctly inferior to the more numerous branch. The latter, membership in which is apportioned among the cantons according to population, is named the National Council (Nationalrat, Conseil national). Subordinate to the Federal Assembly, and elected by it, is the Federal Council (Bundesrat, Conseil fédéral), an executive commission of seven members, one of whom is designated annually as "federal president" (Bundespräsident, président de la confédération). As such, however, he has no special powers, his chief function being to act as chairman of the Federal Council. Finally, there is the Federal Court (Bundesgericht, Tribunal fédéral), composed of twenty-six judges, also elected by the Federal Assembly. It is divided into numerous chambers, among them two specially referred to in the text which were set up in 1929, one to deal with cases in administrative law *(Verwaltungsrechtliche Kammer)*, the other to take jurisdiction in cases arising among officials *(Beamtenkammer)*. Although the highest judicial organ in Switzerland, the Federal Court does not possess the power to declare acts of the federal legislature unconstitutional.

Lord Bryce estimated that five-sixths of the *American Commonwealth* was derived from conversations with Americans and only one-sixth from books. So precise and mathematical an allotment of credit the author finds it difficult to make in connection with his own brief excursion into a similar but much more restricted field. He is deeply conscious of his indebtedness to the ton or more of books, public documents, and pamphlets brought back from Switzerland in 1927, and subsequently reinforced by innumerable periodicals, newspapers, and clippings sent to him by Swiss correspondents. Wherever desirable for the guidance of readers, references have been made in footnotes to all more valuable sources of the foregoing character.

Great as is the author's indebtedness to the printed page, he owes more than he can ever hope to repay to Swiss friends who seemed never to tire of answering his innumerable, and often doubtless stupid, questions about their methods of civic training. Those who gave generously of their time and stores of knowledge are far too numerous to mention; indeed, some of them might be embarrassed by being held responsible for certain unfavorable opinions recorded in the following pages for which the writer wishes to accept undivided responsibility. Among his friends credit is due in the first instance to those walking encyclopedias of the up-to-the-minute information, the professional secretaries of many organizations—partisan, professional, and economic—including among the latter peasants' unions, trade-unions, and business men's associations. Second only to them were university professors and public-school teachers; librarians, archivists, and statisticians; diplomatic and consular officials; legislators, judges, administrative officials, civil servants, and army officers; party leaders and lawyers; authors, editors, officials of press associations, special correspondents, and reporters; priests and pastors; and finally, reformers and radicals of every shade of opinion. Wherever he went, letters of introduction were showered upon him for use in the next city or canton, not that they were always necessary, for apparently Swiss citizens of every class are keenly interested in politics and take particular pleasure in discussing that subject with their foreign guests. Not least among the author's sources of information were chance talks with inn and hotel keepers, waiters, porters, retail shopkeepers, newsdealers, tobacconists, street-car and railway conductors, chauffeurs, guides, herdsmen, students and school children encountered on hikes, and the always pleasant and helpful company to be met in smoking compartments, especially when riding second or third class on branch lines or in the comfortable motor busses operated by the Federal Post Department. In short, the field work which served as a basis for the present study was a constant delight, so much so that if all nations were like the Swiss the author would enjoy nothing better than a millennial lease of life to be devoted to the making of a more thorough acquaintance with each of them.

Robert C. Brooks

Swarthmore College
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania
1930

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. Dominating and Competing Loyalties of the Swiss . 1

II. Economic Groups and Political Representation . . 28

III. Swiss Political Parties: History, Organization, Composition, Politics 48

IV. Educational and Recreational Activities of Swiss Political Parties 78

V. Participation in Swiss Elections, Popular Votes, Landsgemeinden, and Town Meetings 107

VI. Government Service, Civil and Military 132

VII. Swiss Schools and School Teachers 171

VIII. Churches and Moral Reform 218

IX. Swiss Family Life and the Woman Movement . . . 241

X. Special Patriotic and Other Societies 256

XI. Language, Literature, and the Press 293

XII. Swiss Symbolism—Ceremonials, Memorials, Flags and Coats-of-Arms, Costumes, Holidays 336

XIII. Cults—Marksmanship, Gymnastics, Singing and Musical Societies 364

XIV. Art; Music; Drama—Open Air Plays 378

XV. Tradition and Devotion to Locality 397

XVI. Foreigners and Foreign Influence in Switzerland . 408

Summary and Estimates 423

Index 433

CHAPTER I

DOMINATING AND COMPETING LOYALTIES OF THE SWISS

As to the dominating loyalty of the Swiss, there can be no doubt at all. It is loyalty to democracy. No people in the world is more accustomed to think of itself in terms of the maxim current in the German-speaking cantons: "*Der Staat, das sind wir selbst!*" ("The State, we ourselves are the State!"). Speaking of the French in 1872, Thiers remarked: "The republic is the form of government that divides us least." So negative a statement is wholly inapplicable to the Swiss; to make it fit their case one would have to say: "Democracy is the form of government that unites us most." Even as thus recast in positive phraseology, critics would arise from Geneva to St. Gallen and from Basel to Lugano, objecting that, from their point of view, democracy is much more than a form of government; that, indeed, it is a rule for the conduct of the individual and of social life in all its forms, and, so far as this rule is not yet observed, an ideal for future endeavor, moral and political.

The Swiss attained democracy, considered simply as a form of government, earlier than any other continental European people. They began to free themselves from monarchy in the thirteen century—from monarchy, that is, still feudal in character and therefore in its weakest estate. With the rise, on every side, of powerful centralized despotisms a limit was set to their own growth; after the Battle of Marignano in 1515 thoughts of military expansion ceased to occupy the Swiss. To be sure, tens of thousands of them served as mercenaries in the armies of foreign princes; but apparently they brought home from the wars money only, returning as they had departed, convinced democrats as far as local affairs were concerned. Monarchy on Swiss soil is therefore one of the driest and dustiest of historical facts, so ancient and outworn that it figures to a slight extent only in the folk tales of the countryside. "Once upon a time there was a good Queen Bertha; how long ago nobody knows, but this is the way the story goes." And as for monarchy abroad, while it served them for generations as a source of income, it also served them as an ever present example of how things should *not* be done in their own country.

Similarly, Swiss democrats settled their final accounts with aristocracy during the Regeneration period. Down to the third decade of the nineteenth century certain families only were *regierungsfähig,* i.e., eligible to hold political office in several of the richer urban cantons, possessing in addition valuable economic privileges. There were also privileges of city over country, as a result of which the peasant population felt itself subjected and exploited. Beginning with 1830 a revolutionary movement, bloodless but none the less effective, swept away these inequalities in canton after canton until eleven, among them several of the largest and most influential, stretching from Lake Constance through the plateau land to the Lake of Geneva and reaching to Ticino on the south, had been "regenerated." The *Geschlechter,* i.e., the aristocratic families of Zürich, Basel, and Geneva, and the patrician families of Bern and Freiburg, retained their wealth, but otherwise they were reduced to the ranks, politically and economically. With the adoption of the federal constitution of 1848 the democratic principles of the Regeneration triumphed throughout the whole country.

There is, however, one striking difference between the monarchic and aristocratic traditions in Switzerland. Both are quite dead for all practical purposes, but the former has been dead so long that scarcely a vestige of it remains. As a more recent corpse, aristocracy has at least left blood-descendants. One still hears the quaint phrase *regierungsfähig* applied to certain families, although it no longer implies hereditary political privilege. If it has any significance at all nowadays, it means only distinguished ancestry, local and cantonal social standing, and perhaps also, as in the case of the gentry of Solothurn, which was the seat of the French embassy under the Old Régime, intermarriage with the former nobility of neighboring countries. In some Swiss cities there is still an aristocratic "Faubourg Saint-Germain," the Junkern Gasse of Bern for example; in others, descendants of the old ruling families maintain a casino of their own for social intercourse of a distinctly exclusive character. According to the man in the street, the blue blood that once coursed in the veins of the *noblesse* has turned to "sweet water." Irreverent as is this remark, it has a certain foundation in fact, owing to too frequent intermarriage between ruling families in past generations. Conscious of the danger, their descendants are said to have shown a distinct preference for foreign spouses recently. Whatever may be the extent of the degeneration present among the *Geschlechter,* traces of the old ability which raised them to power and privilege still remain. One of their sons may have a crippled idiot for a brother, yet be perfect physically and phenomenally brilliant mentally. If he chooses to devote himself to the service of the state, it is alleged that the lustre of his family name may help him to a diplomatic career. To this small remnant of political privilege, then, is reduced an aristocracy which in its own right ruled the greater part of Switzerland down to a century ago.

Democratic in part from the thirteenth century, Switzerland has been wholly democratic since 1848, from the federation down through the canton to the commune. Historically, of course, the three terms should be reversed, for popular rule began in the smallest local units, rising slowly to the dignity of statehood first in a few remote valleys of the higher Alps, and, as we have just noted, establishing itself in rich urban centers only after the lapse of five centuries. Thence only did the upthrust of the movement carry it into the sphere of central government.[1] Quite as much as in the United States, therefore, and with an even greater degree of truth, the Swiss are accustomed to speak of the cantons as experiment stations for the testing of new political devices, which, proving successful there, are taken over by the federation. Certainly this was the case with the greatest and most daring of their political experiments, democracy itself. And to this day, indeed, the degree of popular rule is greatest the smaller the unit concerned, stronger in the canton than in the federation, stronger in the commune than in the canton, manifesting itself to the same degree in non-political voluntary associations and groupings of every sort excepting the Catholic church and business corporations. Finally it appears to be strongest of all in the individual citizen himself, as one would expect after long centuries of experience had molded character.

In any walk of life the Swiss exhibits a certain deliberateness, based upon a consideration of the tempo of the mass to which he belongs. He is curious to know his neighbors' views and profoundly impressed by majorities. Warlike as his ancestors were, he has turned his back upon violence; in his opinion political questions are to be settled by voting; nevertheless, if any element should attempt to start a ruction in the *Schweizerhaus*—the term he sometimes uses affectionately in referring to the federal structure—he is quite ready to fight to keep the peace—witness 1847 and 1918. He recognizes realities readily, accepting them with a minimum of squalling; one may be assured that the defeated group in any conflict, political or military, will take its medicine calmly and go back to work on the following day. The day after that it will form a political party to salvage what it can from the wreck. On the one hand, the Swiss citizen sets great store upon personal independence—hence strenuous industry, economic self-reliance, thrifty use of means, and the avoidance of ostentation in every form. It is much easier to understand the overwhelming defeat of the capital tax levy of 1922 when one takes into consideration the fact that 2,800,000 persons, or 70 per cent of the population, had savings-bank deposits averaging 1,000 francs each.[2] Further, property in Switzerland is divided far more evenly than in neighboring great states; witness the figures quoted below regarding the size of farm holdings.[3] Moreover, the aggregate wealth of the country is much larger than is commonly supposed; indeed, relative to population, it is one of the richest, if not *the* richest, in the world. Probably it will come with something of a shock of surprise to Americans to learn that, according to figures recently published, the per capita wealth of Switzerland is $3,126; that of New Zealand, which comes second in rank, $3,029; and of the United States, which is third, $2,908.[4] Figures such as the foregoing explain in large part the relatively low virulence of the more radical parties in Switzerland.

---

[1] Cf. on this point Eduard His, *Geschichte des neuern Schweizerischen Staatsrechts* (Basel: Helbing u. Lichtenhahn, 1929), II, 761.

In addition to their highly developed property sense the Swiss possess, on the other hand, a profound sense of social obligation. It is easy to exaggerate the importance of slogans and maxims; nevertheless, when, instead of referring to themselves as citizens, they use the ancient term *Eidgenossen,* the latter is not without significance. "Comrades of the oath" their ancestors were; and, although Swiss of the present day no longer obligate themselves by a vow when they attain manhood, the implied compact has become bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh. Nor is their national motto, "One for all, all for one," to be taken as meaningless; even in these days when the air is full of sound and fury about class conflict, the overwhelming majority of Swiss mean to continue living together, adapting themselves one to another, all differences of language, confession, and worldly condition to the contrary notwithstanding.

---

[2] According to the *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1923,* p. 145, the exact figures for the end of the year 1918 were as follows: total number of savings-bank deposit books, 2,817,795 equal to 72.9 per cent of the resident population of that year; total savings-bank deposits recorded therein, 2,646,645,767 francs; average per bank book, 939 francs. Between 1897 and 1918 the number of savings-bank accounts in Switzerland more than doubled, while the amount deposited increased 168 per cent. In all but the poorest Swiss families it is customary to start savings-bank accounts for children at birth or shortly thereafter. As soon as they are able to understand, they are encouraged to deposit the customary gifts made by godfathers and godmothers, the presents of relatives, and later a part of their own earnings, thus forming a habit which continues as a rule through the years of adult life.

[3] See chap. ii.

[4] In Redmond and Company's *World Economic Chart* for 1928. The writer confesses, however, that he is not overly impressed by figures based upon aggregate national wealth. A category including so many forms of economic goods can scarcely be applied uniformly to many countries; moreover, it must rest in large part upon estimates rather than upon enumeration. True ownership is impossible of ascertainment in many instances. Particularly in the case of Switzerland he recalls certain rather vague remarks made by well-informed persons to the effect that rich citizens of foreign countries, mindful of heavy income taxes or uncertain political conditions, are accustomed to intrust large sums to Swiss bankers of unexceptional probity, requesting the latter to hold them in their own names indefinitely and without sending periodic accounts, which under the circumstances might prove embarrassing. Of course, principal and interest are collected in the end, also in quite unobtrusive ways. Meanwhile, however, such sums would probably figure in estimates of the national wealth of Switzerland. Whatever truth there may be in the foregoing allegations, certain it is that Swiss border cities are supplied with so large a number of banking establishments that one must wonder where they find a sufficient number of clients to keep them all going.

Finally one notes among the Swiss not only an almost automatic adjustment to the mass but also—undoubtedly its concomitant—a deep distrust of leaders, especially such as appear unusually brilliant or forceful. There is a tremendous loyalty among them to the state broadly conceived, that is, including local as well as central government; nor are they deficient in loyalty to the slightest degree in private relations. On the contrary, they give the impression of unusual trustworthiness to all who come in contact with them. As a general proposition the proverb that democracies are ungrateful has but slight validity;[5] nevertheless, it applies with full force to the Swiss democracy. Thoroughly loyal to the state, they manifest surprisingly little admiration for statesmen; their politics are conspicuously impersonal; their heroes are all dead heroes. Although the present is anything but a period of brilliant European personalities, no leader in Swiss affairs possesses anything like the popular esteem accorded MacDonald, Baldwin, or Lloyd George in England; Briand or Poincaré in France; von Hindenburg or Stresemann in Germany; or Mussolini in Italy. Nevertheless, there are now, as there have been during recent decades, one or two federal councilors who compare favorably in personal ability and forcefulness with any of the foregoing.

Constitutionally, Swiss popular distrust of powerful leaders is reflected by the collegiate form of executive employed both in the federation and in all the cantons except those which have Landsgemeinden. The Landamman of the latter is usually an outstanding authority, a sort of father to his little country. Without doubt this exception is permitted because the people in the midst of whom he lives are able always to keep him under the closest kind of surveillance. From time to time voices are raised denouncing the fear of vigorous political leadership and suggesting that Switzerland institute a powerful one-man presidency resembling that of the United States, but the suggestion receives scant notice outside academic circles.[6] Meanwhile the members of the Federal Council continue to be grossly overworked and grossly underpaid, in spite of which not one of them has ever been guilty of corruption in office.

---

[5] Lord Bryce examines and effectively demolishes it in *Modern Democracies,* II, 558.

Perhaps the contrast noted above between Swiss and Americans should not be pushed too far. It is true that as a rule we are unconscious of any logical inconsistency between democratic principles and one-man power. As illustrations of our easy acceptance of the latter may be cited not only the presidency but also our hundreds of city managers. On the other hand, American devotion to democratic dogma reveals itself more or less subconsciously in the anti-third–term tradition, also more openly in the extension of the recall which has now been made applicable to state officials in eleven commonwealths and to municipal officers in well over a thousand cities.[6a] Against extra-legal or illegal assumption of power by individuals—political bosses, corporation executives, bootleg barons—Americans are also accustomed to protest. Not, however, with the same force or effectiveness as the Swiss, witness the freedom of their country from such excrescences upon democracy.

The name of Mussolini, referred to above, accounts for part of Swiss present-day antagonism to dominating personalities. Silently, but none the less cordially, that name is loathed throughout the country, as are also contemporary theories upholding dictatorship whether of the right or of the left. But Swiss sentiment on the subject goes much farther back in their history, being derived originally from the earlier struggles against Holy Roman emperors and various neighboring kings and princes. It was tremendously strengthened by their experiences under Napoleonic despotism during the period of Mediation (1803–15). Finally, the Regeneration, as noted above, broke the power of aristocrats and patricians, since which time the Swiss have always laid extreme stress on the reign of laws and constitutions *(Herrschaft der Gesetze und der Grundsätze)*, in contradistinction to the rule of men. With so long a heredity it is not strange that the feeling should have become well-nigh instinctive. It errs, of course, in that it deprives the Swiss of the full and untrammeled services of their ablest men in politics. On the other hand, it illustrates admirably their extreme devotion to the democratic principle.

---

[6] It was made by Professor W. E. Rappard, of the University of Geneva, in his interesting pamphlet, *Notre grande république sœur* (Geneva, 1916); and has been revived recently in a forceful book criticizing Swiss politics generally by Carl Horber, *Die schweizerische Politik* (Zürich: Bopp, 1928).

[6a] F. L. Bird and F. M. Ryan, *The Recall of Public Officers*, p. 4.

The writer is well aware that generalizations regarding national character such as the foregoing are not of unquestioned validity. Swiss Socialists and Communists, and the few sectarians who uphold functional representation or dictatorship, for example, would contest them point by point. Long ago Edmund Burke observed: "I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people." Drawing a portrait is considerably more difficult than drawing up an indictment, for the latter is good if a single count can be made to hold, whereas the former must present all features of the subject in their proper proportion. Nevertheless, it seems clear that no composite photograph of the contemporary "democratic man" could be taken that would not reflect Swiss physiognomy in every lineament. It is not intended to suggest that the type is final or perfect; on the contrary, its evolution is still continuing, and, so far as perfection is concerned, there was quite as much shrewdness as sarcasm in the term "mediocracy" which Vandervelde applied to the Swiss. In his insufferably egotistic manner Count von Keyserling has been even more sarcastic, if somewhat less shrewd, regarding Swiss traits in his recent *Spektrum Europas,*[7] with the result that rural editors from one end of the country to the other roared in protest. Nevertheless, what he said about the fundamental democracy of Switzerland, although colored by the noble philosopher's ineffable contempt, was essentially true and was so recognized by a few of the leading journals of opinion. After all, that controversy was summed up neatly several years ago by Bernard Shaw when in *Arms and the Man* he made the gushing Raina observe to the Swiss soldier: "You have a low, shopkeeping mind. You think of things that would never come into a gentleman's head"; to which Bluntschli phlegmatically replies: "That's the Swiss national character, dear lady." And the Swiss are perfectly aware of it, being somewhat inclined on occasion to quote to each other the ancient and tart aphorism: "*Point d'argent, point de Suisse*"; although it must be said that, to the foreign observer, they seem no more engrossed in the pursuit of the nimble franc than are Germans, English, or Americans in pursuit of the elusive mark, the lordly pound sterling, or the almighty dollar. Whatever unlovely traits may be discerned in the national character—and of course from an aristocratic viewpoint these will always appear to be numerous—it cannot be contested that, as a people, the Swiss are profoundly democratic; further that, as such, they are thoroughly adapted to the type of government which has grown out of the popular soul. As Lord Bryce put it,

---

[7] Cf. especially pp. 283–319. The book was published by Kampmann, Heidelberg, in 1928, and has since been translated into English.

> After all, the most interesting lesson Switzerland teaches is how traditions and institutions, taken together, may develop in the average man, to an extent never reached before, the qualities which make a good citizen—shrewdness, moderation, common sense and a sense of duty to the community. It is because this has come to pass in Switzerland that democracy is there more truly democratic than in any other country in the world.[8]

With all their accustomed modesty the Swiss take an almost proprietary interest in democracy. Why not, indeed, since, although they seldom say it, they feel that they invented it? Not only did they invent it as early as the thirteenth century, but it was they also who, in the nineteenth century equipped it with those modern accessories, the initiative and referendum, which have found favor the planet round. Perhaps consciousness of meritorious service to the cause of popular rule has produced at times some slight swelling of the Swiss head; thus several decades ago Gottfried Keller put the following words in the mouth of one of his characters, Martin Salander: "Many things would be more bearable with us if we were less self-satisfied and did not always confuse patriotism with self-conceit." Almost forgetting the habitual caution more recently used in referring to such matters, a contemporary Swiss historian of note, Eduard Fueter, reveals their inward thought on the subject as follows:

> The referendum and the institutions connected therewith, such as the popular initiative, etc., after being hotly opposed in the beginning, have become so much a matter of fact that at present the Swiss citizen scarcely takes into account what a revolutionary innovation, what a daring experiment, this device was considered to be originally. Still less is he accustomed to reflect that in this type of government Switzerland made its most original political discovery. While the uniqueness of the older Swiss institutions is for the most part overestimated, the reverse is the case regarding these institutions, especially in the federation itself. Of recent decades the special characteristics of this Swiss product have been appreciated in their full extent more by foreigners than by our own citizens, with the exception naturally of our specialists in public law. . . . . Whoever wishes to write a Swiss history for foreigners only would be obliged to place this institution precisely in the center of his discussion.[9]

---

[8] *Modern Democracies,* ii, 449.

[9] Cf. *Die Schweiz seit 1848* (Zürich: Füssli, 1928), p. 105.

Ingenuous as the foregoing is, and modest also to a degree—witness the last sentence—it is quite true throughout except in its depreciation of the older forms of Swiss democracy. From them at least were derived both the name and the essential characteristics of the modern referendum. In any event, one essential point implied rather than stated by Dr. Fueter should not be overlooked, namely that the Swiss of today have become so perfectly adapted to the devices of direct democracy that they operate them almost automatically.

Pride in their own type of democracy crops up occasionally in the conversation of the Swiss when reference is made to other countries. Regarding Germany since the revolution of 1918, they are likely to take a somewhat fatherly attitude; remembering their own five hundred years of experience they excuse the errors of the great republican Reich to the north as due to immaturity—the natural childhood diseases to be expected in such cases, so to speak. French democracy is fairly well seasoned, they must admit, but much too centralized to suit them. Swiss students of government are keenly aware that their federal system is neither parliamentary nor presidential, and quite naturally most of them feel that in this respect it possesses advantages over both the government of England and that of the United States. In the latter country they are unfeignedly interested, not so much because of its democracy as because of its federal principle from which they borrowed extensively in 1848. Of course they are much too courteous to express freely to an American citizen what they think of our one-man executives, our machines and bosses, our increasing centralization and standardized life, our political corruption, or our prohibition.

Popular respect for democracy among the Swiss is further evidenced by the general avoidance of flippancy and savage criticism in referring to it. One may criticize officials or the government trenchantly enough, one may even poke gentle humor at them, as Felix Moeschlin has recently done;[10] but the principle of popular rule itself is too thoroughly accepted to be lightly or scurrilously attacked. No more illuminating reference to the national character has been made than the remark of Dr. Oeri at a meeting of the New Helvetic Society in 1926, to the effect that "in Switzerland one no more discusses democracy than one discusses the nose on one's face." Unconsciously the Swiss make a distinction resembling that of eighteenth-century theorists between the king, a human and quite fallible creature on the one hand, and monarchy, a divine and benevolent institution, on the other.

---

[10] Cf. his delightful *Eidgenössische Glossen* (Zürich: Rentsch, 1928).

To be sure there are various little groups of serious thinkers in Western Switzerland who attack parliamentarism vigorously, proposing, instead, various forms of functional representation; but they are few in number and excessively dry and scientific in the presentation of their case. Some of them take their cue from the *Action française,* using, however, much more restrained language. Among the Swiss there are also a handful of admirers of Mussolini, very few of whom are to be found in Ticino, where his methods are best understood. Nor should one overlook the small and dwindling Communist party which is alleged to be in receipt of hourly orders from Moscow on how to instal the dictatorship of the proletariat tomorrow or the day after, but which apparently is not executing them to the entire satisfaction of the Third International. As for the Social Democratic party, it is democratic as well as socialist, rather more of the former, considering its composition, than the latter. From all these sources, none of which, with the exception of the latter, possesses appreciable following or influence, criticisms of democratic dogma are made; but the surprising thing about them as a whole is the large measure of restraint with which they are expressed. Blatherskite is scrupulously avoided in referring to the sovereign people: a book such as Mencken's *Notes on Democracy* is unthinkable in Switzerland. Obviously it is impossible to gain a following, even a literary following, among the people of that country by taking a vituperative line against the principle of democracy; readers would promptly set down the author as an ass. On the other hand, criticism regarding its workings, especially if expressed in measured terms, is listened to avidly. If considered valid, one of two conclusions, or both, are certain to emerge: first, that some new device must be worked out which, while preserving popular rule, will correct the defect in question; second, that there must be something wrong with the people, which once eliminated, will enable democracy to function properly. Nine times out of ten the reform proposed in the latter case will be concerned largely with the processes of public education.

Not that the Swiss have any superstitious reverence for democracy per se; neither do they consider it a cure-all for political evils of every sort. They did extend the referendum to cover treaties in 1921, but the step was taken with grave misgivings. It is profoundly significant of their attitude as contrasted with our own that, while the recall has been largely adopted throughout the United States, a somewhat similar institution, the ancient *Abberufung*, has long been obsolete in Switzerland.[10a] Nor is there any inclination among them to bring ju-

[10a] Cf. the author's *Government and Politics of Switzerland,* p. 321.

dicial processes under direct democratic control. Any suggestion of the latter character is certain to be countered by references to the bloody excesses which occurred in Graubünden during the earlier part of the seventeenth century. Spurred on by the religious animosities of the time, so-called Landsgemeinden were held in that canton which in reality were armed mobs of partisans who compelled judges of their own confession to sentence political adversaries to death, which sentences were promptly executed on the spot. Equally terrible reprisals followed until finally the people came to their senses. Since that time anything savoring of lynch law or even of direct popular control of court procedure has been condemned universally by the Swiss.

As political democrats, therefore, the Swiss leave little to be desired; indeed, some critics among them think conditions might be improved if they worked more and voted less. What, however, of those who maintain that democracy is more than a governmental form, that it should be accepted as a rule of life in all social relations, to be striven for until fully realized? Thus ideally conceived, no people, of course, can lay claim to having attained democracy. Measured by so high a standard, even the Swiss fall far short. To be sure, their federal constitution declares that: "All Swiss are equal before the law. There are in Switzerland no relations of subjection, no privileges of place, of birth, of families, or persons."[11] In spite of this provision and of the wide powers of democratic control conferred upon the citizenry, women excepted, it is of course true in Switzerland as in other Western European countries that differences of wealth, of reputation, of education, of position, and so on, exist to a considerable degree. While differences of wealth are not so great or so obtrusive as in the neighboring large states, nevertheless they are the object of attack by the Socialists, whose party is among the largest in Switzerland. From their point of view the democratization of the country is less than half completed so long as economic inequality persists.

Even by members of middle-class parties grave misgivings as to the ideals of Swiss democracy are sometimes expressed. One gathers that formerly this frame of mind was much less common. Prior to the World War the quality of Swiss democracy in the political sphere was relatively so advanced that even the most hard-headed citizens found it easy to regard their country as leading the forefront of civilization, consoling themselves for the smallness of its territory by the conviction of its spiritual greatness. With the world-wide extension of the initiative and referendum and with the advent after the war of a num-

[11] Article 4.

ber of new democratic states in the heart of Europe itself, the Swiss can no longer take so smugly satisfied a view of their position. As a result there are not a few John the Baptists in their midst announcing the coming of new ideals and the consequent restoration of the country's spiritual leadership. Some of these forerunners of a new era dream of perfected social legislation and social insurance. Others preach disarmament and world-peace, pointing to the reconciliation of German-, French-, and Italian-speaking citizens under the Swiss federation as prophetic of the approach of a new world-order. Still others, like the primary-school teachers of Geneva, propose that their government should disband the army and apply the funds thus saved to grandiose schemes for the relief of the poor children of neighboring nations. The plan for the training of youth to civilian service also belongs in this category.

It is unquestionable that the more conscientious leaders of Swiss thought are preoccupied with the search for new social and political ideals to a degree not common elsewhere. And this preoccupation is shared by large numbers of their fellow-citizens; witness the phenomenal success, particularly among the younger generation, of such a book as *Die Neue Schweiz* by Dr. Leonhard Ragaz, professor in the theological faculty of the University of Zürich, which ran to four editions and was translated into French and Italian.[12] While somewhat "preachy" and inclined to bear down rather too heavily upon the faults of the Swiss, it sought frankly to develop a program that would place their country in the moral and social forefront of the world. A foreign observer who takes it for granted that citizens of the Alpine republic are human beings, not angels, is likely to be amazed at certain of Ragaz' strictures against the press, party system, army, and civil service, and particularly at his contention that the hotel industry is producing a servile disposition among the population. On the contrary, all who are engaged in that pursuit seem to conduct it on a rather high business, almost indeed a professional, plane, wholly without flunkyism or pandering and in a thoroughly self-respecting manner. If there is any more dignified human being than a Swiss majordomo, the author has not yet encountered him; nor is the same trait lacking in waiters, porters, or guides, who, even if they do accept tips, know their trades to the last detail and command, as much as they give, respect. No doubt some tourists are swine, but even swine can be handled without besmirching one's self. As a rule the Swiss impulse toward social idealism overreaches itself, resulting in a rather snarleyow attitude toward home conditions generally. Sometimes, indeed, it takes a decidedly fantastic form: thus one of the intelligentsia, who nevertheless belongs to a conservative political party, told the writer that he favored the abolition of all criminal penalties. Wrongdoers might be tried and convicted in the courts, but prisons were to be abolished and punishment left to the individual's own conscience. Into his arguments to prove the practicability of the plan it is not necessary to go; suffice it to say that the strongest reason advanced on the score of its desirability was that it would place Switzerland in the van of a great moral movement to uplift humanity as a whole.

---

[12] Originally published in 1917 and hence strongly impressed by war conditions, the fourth edition appeared a few years later from the Verlagsanstalt W. Trösch, Olten.

Second only to Swiss loyalty to democracy is their devotion to the federal principle. In one sense, of course, the latter might be considered a competing loyalty, opposed to nationalizing sentiment. There are various reasons, however, for regarding it as complementary rather than hostile to the idea of unity. The Swiss have always laid great stress on the decentralized character of their government, distinguishing themselves sharply from the French in this respect. To them democracy means not so much uniformity as liberty—liberty of the canton, of the commune, of the individual himself in the last analysis. Just as they associate the ideas of neutrality and peace with their political system, so also they associate with it the idea of local self-determination. In short, cantonal, communal, and individual rights are an integral part of the federal democratic structure rather than loyalties opposed to it. In this connection it is not without significance that, reversing our American nomenclature, federalism to them means decentralization: thus they refer constantly to the antagonism between the *föderalistische Prinzip* and the *zentralistische Prinzip*. Writing of the United States in the late eighties of the preceding century, Bryce remarked that it had "a double government, a double allegiance, a double patriotism," adding with regard to its people: "There are two loyalties, two patriotisms; and the lesser patriotism . . . . is jealous of the greater."[13] One cannot help feeling that the distinguished observer from unitary England deceived himself somewhat as to the strength of the—to him—novel, because apparently dual, spirit of patriotism in the United States. In any event, after four decades of railroads, large-scale industry and automobiles, and of resulting uniformity, standardization, and centralization, the "lesser" sentiment is greatly attenuated if not moribund among us. In Switzerland, on the other hand, it is generally regarded as vital and essential,

[13] *The American Commonwealth,* I, 15, 17.

and cherished as a peculiar national good of the greatest value. Hard-headed statesmen dare not disregard it; if they are so incautious as not to take it sufficiently into account, their best-laid plans are likely to go smash at the ensuing referendum. The attachment of the great mass of the people to the principle of local self-rule and their practical familiarity with it is shown by the fact that not only political parties but other large associations of a voluntary character are organized almost invariably on a cantonal basis with their central authorities empowered to represent them only in national and international affairs, all other powers being left in the hands of local bodies.

In nearly all orations and essays regarding the dangers which the future may hold in store for Switzerland, first place is given to the menace of centralization. Thus Konrad Falke, addressing the students of the University of Geneva toward the end of the World War, called their attention particularly to

> the *political antinomy,* the internal antagonism, which is characteristic of our state, and which on each occasion when in the course of our development one or the other of its poles was approached, became a danger to freedom. One may say: from its first beginnings the Swiss confederation steered between the Scylla of federalism and the Charybdis of centralization its proud Odyssey of freedom through the world. For more than five hundred years the Charybdis of centralization was avoided, at the end so blindly and one-sidedly that our state, in that epoch of which history speaks as the Downfall of the Old Confederation, became a sacrifice to the Scylla of federalism. This experience—and further the circumstance that in the ensuing century of technical development and commerce the pressure exercised by foreign countries increased even in times of peace—is at fault for the subsequent preponderance of the centralizing tendency, which since the outbreak of the war has reached such a degree that now it seems to many that *in making freedom secure, freedom itself has been lost.* . . . . The centralizing idea is an eminently un-Swiss, because unfree idea; it is the father of imperialism, and the most terrible thing about it is that today the whole world has fallen under its sway.[14]

Since the foregoing words were uttered, the plenipotentiary power *(unbeschränkte Vollmacht)* conferred upon the Swiss federal executive as a necessary measure of war defense has been repealed.[15] Nevertheless, Falke's thesis is in general as valid as the day it was enunciated. It implies pretty clearly that, were they alone in the world, the

[14] The address from which the foregoing was taken appeared in pamphlet form under the title, *Die Gefahren der Schweiz* (Zürich: Rascher, 1918).

[15] As to the content of the power thus conferred, see the author's *Government and Politics of Switzerland,* p. 114.

Swiss might still be perfectly happy with the loosest of leagues, almost complete sovereignty remaining in the hands of the cantons. However, because of the existence of outside powers a large degree of centralization is, unfortunately, necessary. The principal justification for centralization, then, is that it renders possible the greatest degree of decentralization capable of attainment within the country. Its greatest danger is that, becoming too powerful, it may subvert the ancient liberties of the Swiss.

To an American, citizen as he is of a federal state, theory of the preceding description seems incredible. Perhaps we are no longer so concerned about our liberties as are the Swiss, being more interested in really important things—material prosperity, for example. There is a further explanation, although quite likely it should be considered merely an elucidation of the foregoing. Behind our state lines there is no longer any "peculiar institution," nothing characteristic or distinctive, which the people wish to preserve. Behind Swiss cantonal lines there are a number of such things, the preservation of which seems a matter of vital importance—religious establishments, language and dialects, local usage and customs generally. Undoubtedly some of them are outworn and obstructive to progress and prosperity, but losing them many Swiss would think equivalent to the loss of their national soul.

Political debate between federalists and centralists in Switzerland is, then, something more than a mere cacophony of dry constitutional formulas. Popular interest in it depends upon a vastly more vital question, the question of the future evolution of Switzerland so far as it can be controlled. Certain conditions are given: the smallness of the country, the dependence of its industries upon foreign markets, active cultural relations with adjacent great powers using the languages current within the country, and so on. With such powerful forces of attrition constantly at work Swiss traits are destined to be worn down somewhat even though they were as hard and massive as the Alps themselves.

From this point onward all is confusion of tongues in Switzerland. There are the Socialists who talk of cutting off the dignified pigtail inherited from the Helvetic, and internationalizing, modernizing, unifying, standardizing and centralizing with a vengeance—the total product of their efficiency-engineering to be divided among the workers. There are members of the Peasants' party who would like to see that class as numerous relatively, and members of the Catholic Conservative party who would like to see the church as powerful, as before

Anno Domini 1848. There are prosperous members of the middle class who think this is the best of all possible worlds, Switzerland by far the best of all possible countries in this particularly blessed world, and who, therefore, mean to stand pat. There are those who tell you that the old Switzerland is dead and that a new Switzerland has arrived; they will even supply you with full details and date of the birth of the latter infant, adding prescriptions for its diet and nurture. Others, quite as convinced, solemnly pooh-pooh all talk of a new Switzerland, affirming that it is the same old Switzerland and always will be; and, finally, there are even certain lugubrious persons who assert that the country became degenerate or died long, long ago.

Amid the babel of tongues which is going on all the time, a few more reasonable voices assert that there is neither a new nor an old, but rather a slowly evolving, Switzerland; that, given peace in Europe, no domestic cataclysm or any sudden change is likely to occur. Of foreign influence they are frankly afraid, particularly of the pull due to be exerted by Germany, once she gets on her feet, with her powerful press and cultural influence, with her marvelous technical efficiency, her large population, and the wealth that one day will be hers again. So far as foreign cultural influence is concerned, the Swiss hope to combat it effectively by educational means. As to industrial competition, whether from the Germans or other nationalities, the hope of Switzerland seems to lie not in mass production but in a limited output of high-quality articles. By experimentation, technical education, intensive industry, and general resourcefulness the Swiss producer may continue to succeed with the small-scale factory units characteristic of the country. Thus the massing of population in great cities will be avoided; local life and custom will continue indefinitely; Switzerland will remain Switzerland.

No matter how rapid the course of Swiss political evolution in the future, one thing seems certain, namely, that the cantons, particularly those of the French-speaking west and Catholic center, will defend themselves sturdily against premature measures of centralization. In such struggles the Council of States, based, like our Senate, on the principle of equal representation, will continue to be their citadel, the referendum their buckler. Two "peculiar institutions" are protected by so determined a local sentiment that they are not in the least likely to be assailed—language and the church. As to matters of pure administration or finance, compromise is always possible. Indeed, they have long been handled with such adroitness and controversial fervor regarding them has so cooled down that, according to a recent historian, there are no longer any absolute federalists or absolute centralists left in the country, each group having developed opportunist tendencies.[16]

In this connection the system of federal subventions is of unusual interest. According to the constitutions both of 1848 and 1874 (Article 42, clause *f*), it was clearly anticipated that the central government would be supported financially in part by cantonal contributions. The reverse has taken place, relatively large sums being handed out every year by the government at Bern for local use. In 1928, for example, such subventions amounted to 65,054,000 francs, more than a sixth of the total federal expenditure of the year. Relative to population, an equivalent expenditure by the United States would total nearly $400,000,000 annually. During the difficult period following the World War when unemployment was rife in Switzerland, much larger amounts were appropriated, a maximum of 157,320,000 francs having been reached in 1922.

Federal subventions have been granted for a large variety of purposes. Unavoidable cases of economic distress are relieved by this means, not only unemployment but crop failures, industrial stoppages, and the like. Among minor items of this character may be noted a small subvention for the relief of persons insured in German companies who stood to lose heavily because of the depreciation of the mark. Unquestionably the policy, beneficent and necessary as in many cases it doubtlessly was, has given the federal treasury something of the character of a financial fairy godmother, to be invoked on every possible or plausible occasion. So great is the interest in the subject that a special report dealing with it is issued annually by the federal statistical office. According to the most recent of these documents now available, which deals with the subventions of 1926,[17] of the seventy million francs appropriated that year some nine millions, counted as extraordinary, went for the relief of unemployment. The ordinary subventions were distributed as follows: social policies, 27.5 per cent; agriculture, 21.5 per cent; education, 14.9 per cent; military and gymnastic training, 7.9 per cent; highways, 7.4 per cent, commerce, industry, and transportation, 5.2 per cent; sanitation, 4.0 per cent; and in smaller amounts to the following: forestry; works of public utility; land measurement; science and art; hunting, fishing, and protection of bird life; police, protection of intellectual property; etc.—truly a generous and somewhat extended catalogue which would amaze the extremely economical founding fathers of 1848 were they to reappear upon the contemporary Swiss scene.

---

[16] Eduard Fueter, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

[17] *Die Bundessubventionen im Jahre 1926, Schweizerische Statistische Mitteilungen,* X. Jhrg., Heft 1 (1928).

While certain subventions are paid directly to private associations of various sorts, including, by the way, not only business organizations but peasant and labor unions also, by far the greater proportion, slightly more than two thirds in 1926, passed through the hands of the cantons. Now, by all the canons of public finance and in accordance with the hoary political dictum about the power of the purse, the infallible consequence of the practice described above would be the aggrandizement of the central government. Certainly that has been the result of the large and increasing subsidies made by our own government at Washington to state governments throughout the country, usually on a fifty-fifty basis and with highly detailed specifications regarding their expenditure.[18] In Switzerland, perhaps because of the greater vitality of cantonal authorities, current opinion inclines to the view that they usually get the better of the transaction. Notoriously the large subvention in aid of public schools is accompanied by a minimum of federal supervision, being employed by Catholic cantons in ways deemed unconstitutional, or worse, by many Protestants. It is admitted that a certain member of the Federal Council whose particular department handles most of the money appropriated for subventions is one of the most powerful men in Switzerland, but obviously he feels the weight of influence and is anvil as well as hammer. Although every claimant denied is an ingrate, it is noticeable that all classes, including religious and language minorities and even associations hostile to the dominant political bloc, dip to a greater or less degree into the golden stream that flows from Bern. A recent cartoon summed up the popular view of the matter in genuine Swiss fashion, portraying the federation as a fat cow being industriously milked at every teat by peasants representing the local governments and private associations of all kinds.

In addition to subventions the cantons divide the income from the military-exemption tax with the central government. Also, they receive the entire net profit derived from the federal alcohol monopoly, the management of which they kindly leave to the authorities at Bern. According to law they are required to spend one-tenth of the income derived from the latter source in combating alcoholism. The ingenuity, not to say perversity, displayed by cantonal authorities in meeting the latter obligation has become proverbial throughout Switzerland. Recently certain local administrators hit upon a particularly happy solution; they spent their tenth collected from vice to support virtue in spraying the vineyards of the district! Their argument was that by so doing they encouraged the consumption of healthful light wines, thus discouraging the consumption of whisky and brandies. In its way it was, of course, a very strong argument; but for once the sorely tried federal authorities balked, refusing to bless with their approval this particular method of combating alcoholism. Both as regards subventions and other monies derived by the cantons from the central treasury, therefore, the conclusion seems warranted that they have not increased the power of the government at Bern.

---

[18] On this point, cf. F. G. Bates and O. P. Field, *State Government,* p. 42.

As the incident above narrated indicates, there are certain minor features connected with home-rule sentiment which after all emphasize its strength, although they are justly satirized as manifestations of the *Kantönligeist*, i.e., petty cantonal spirit. For example, rights to poor relief bound up with local citizenship make it decidedly unpleasant to lose the latter if one subsequently becomes indigent. In one case which attracted much attention at the time, a woman, married to a citizen of another canton and presumably thereby acquiring its citizenship, was divorced by her husband. When she fell into poverty, his canton refused assistance, alleging that she had lost her citizenship there by divorce. And her original canton refused it on the ground that the divorce had not affected her new citizenship acquired by marriage. The case was carried to the Federal Court, and the latter handed down a decision placing the burden of relief upon the canton in which she had lived prior to marriage. Cases are also said to occur in which paupers as to whose birthplace doubt exists are shoved back and forth over cantonal boundary lines, having a decidedly sorry time of it, poor creatures.

It is not suggested that crass economic considerations of the foregoing sort account to any large degree for the strength of local attachments; nevertheless, they exist and play some sort of a part in these matters. In particular the ancient burgher communes *(Bürgergemeinden)* seem to be held together largely by the cohesive power of common property in forest, meadow, or tillable land, although they have fallen far behind the resident communes *(Einwohnergemeinden)* in political importance. Moreover, local prejudice against outsiders makes it difficult for them to secure employment in certain lines. For this reason nearly all the teachers in the public-school system of each canton are recruited from within the canton itself, whereas obviously a considerable amount of interchange would be of marked benefit. Swiss citizens bred in the plateau region who take up their residence in certain of the more remote cantons are looked upon by their new neighbors almost as foreigners. Similar prejudices are not unknown in highly developed urban centers. A professional man of more than national prominence whose earlier life had been passed, let us say, in Canton X, confessed to the writer that, after fifteen years' residence in the principal city of Canton Y, he still found it necessary to exercise caution as to his participation in local affairs. If petitions were to be circulated, for instance, it was highly desirable that the names heading the list should be those of members of long-established families. Woman suffragists found that the sending of orators from one canton into another where a campaign was going on might do more harm than good to their cause. In some respects *Kantönligeist* seems to be stronger than formerly. A recent historian notes that in the first years following the adoption of the constitution of 1848 it happened occasionally that men were elected to the National Council from electoral districts other than those in which they resided, in some cases even from other cantons.[19] At present, apparently, this practice is unknown in Switzerland.

Turning now to the actual competing loyalties present in Switzerland, we find that it is probable that most foreign observers would rate them in the order of their putative importance as follows: first, racial and linguistic; second, economic; third, religious. Such an arrangement, however, reflects the usual outside viewpoint of the essential difficulties connected with these three areas of friction rather than the real condition of affairs within the country. Troublesome as racial and linguistic difficulties have proved elsewhere, severe as was the strain resulting from them in Switzerland during the early years of the World War, nevertheless they seem, for the present at least, to be almost completely overcome; in other words, they should be ranked third rather than first, as in the foregoing series. Omnipresent in the political world today, economic class interest, as manifested primarily by a large and growing Socialist party, and by a Peasants' party—also strong in spite of its recent origin—is unquestionably second among the competing loyalties of Switzerland; indeed, it would no doubt be ranked first by large numbers of citizens of the property-owning class in that country. Of course, many imponderables must be taken into account in forming a judgment on such complicated matters, all of which, however, incline the writer to the opinion that religious, or rather confessional, attachments constitute the most powerful competing loyalties present among the Swiss today.

If there are two Switzerlands, living side by side but estranged from each other, one of them is Protestant, the other Catholic. Perhaps the expression "two Switzerlands" puts the case too strongly, but at least it has the merit of illuminating the situation. In using it, one need not make particular reference to the fact that Switzerland alone among European countries fought a religious war during the nineteenth century. The Sonderbund affair of 1847 was not much of a war anyway; it was mercifully short and almost bloodless. In its consequences, as in the consequences of the *Kulturkampf* of the early seventies, there has been general acquiescence. Nor is Switzerland exceptional because it possesses a Catholic political party; there is the old Centrum, now the Christian People's party, in Germany; and the powerful Clerical party in Belgium. Moreover, the church has always succeeded in making its political influence sufficiently felt wherever it possesses a considerable following.

---

[19] Eduard Fueter, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

Examining the Catholic Conservative party of Switzerland, as we shall have occasion to do somewhat in detail later, one soon perceives, however, that it is built upon an organization into social groups of every conceivable sort of the population belonging to that confession, an organization which for thoroughness, detail, and effectiveness is unsurpassed. More recently both the Socialist party and the Peasants' party have attempted with considerable success to build foundations for themselves of the same sort. It is admitted even by their opponents, however, that the Catholic Conservative structure is unassailable. Nearly every association into which Swiss citizens enter for nation-wide purposes is divided along confessional lines. It is in the latter connection that the expression regarding "two Switzerlands" is justified if at all.

Everywhere the dividing line between the two systems of social groups runs deep. Apparently much depends upon the attitude of the local clergy in communes where both elements are represented. If priest and pastor get on well together, the tension relaxes; if either or both are militant in the faith, withdrawal occurs on both sides until the line between them becomes virtually a gulf. In some towns of considerable size Catholics group themselves around the cathedral as though it were a citadel, confining trade and social relations to those of their own faith; while in the outer Protestant section the same segregated order prevails. It is an unhappy situation, particularly so when the two have occasion to co-operate for some common end. On the other hand, it is better than a state of open conflict, which is unusual, the confessions simply ignoring each other to an incredible degree. Friction is further reduced by the fact that in nine cantons and in many scattered communes outside them Catholics are in an overwhelming majority. Co-operation is more common in the case of well-to-do Catholics, who quite frequently sit on boards of directors with Protestants of the same economic rating. It is between the poorer members and peasants of the two sects that intercourse is most closely restricted.

Segregated life of this sort cannot continue for generations and centuries without leaving its mark. As a matter of fact, it is comparatively easy to tell, by various indications, to which confession the Swiss commune one happens to be entering belongs. Of course the presence of priests, monks, or nuns with their distinctive garb usually settles the question out of hand, but even in their absence plenty of other signs obtrude themselves. In these degenerate days when short skirts, short sleeves, and the *Bubikopf*, or bobbed hair—all, by the way, regarded as typically American—are fairly prevalent in lowland Swiss cities, it is with a slight shock of surprise that one observes the women of a mountain village, all of whom wear their hair long, their sleeves long, and their skirts, from a sanitary point of view, much too long. Perhaps the latter archaic styles of dress are not unrelated to a notice in three languages found on the doors of the Catholic churches in some sections of the country, the English version of which, evidently designed for tourists, reads in part, somewhat awkwardly, it is true, but unmistakable in meaning, as follows: "The women are not allowed to enter into the house of God if they are not covered with the dress to the neck and with the sleeves further than the elbow." In such a village the local peasant costume, often a quite beautiful thing, will be worn more commonly by both sexes; on the other hand, threadbare, patched, and ragged clothing is much in evidence. Men with bushy hair, often unkempt, and patriarchal beards abound. Many children go barefoot; also some men and women. Houses and stables are not in such good repair; and the basic perfume of Swiss rural life everywhere, that of cow manure, is here interpenetrated with the acrid reek of pig-droppings. There are more cobblestones in the streets than elsewhere, more moss between the cobblestones; more flies, cobwebs, and spiders to be seen in the interiors. Burdens borne on the backs of men and women or pushed about in handcarts are heavier; the speed with which they go about their work is notably less. The men and women themselves seem more submissive; certainly they are more respectful in intercourse with strangers. Evidences of alcoholism and other forms of degeneration are more common; one encounters more deformed, goitrous, hunchbacked, dwarfish human beings, even an occasional cretin. It is all very picturesque and relaxed and Old Worldly; perhaps, indeed, saner and happier than the smug, repressed, and rather commonplace life of Protestant villages in the neighborhood of Zürich or Geneva. While the two types of existence may be going on within a few miles of each other, they seem ages apart historically and psychologically. Of course, some of the social stigmata referred to in the foregoing are the result of life in a high-mountain environment; nevertheless, they appear to be markedly increased in number by segregation on a confessional basis.

So much for the debit side of the ledger. Wide as is the gulf between Catholic and Protestant Switzerland, however, there is not the slightest likelihood that the Sonderbund war will ever be fought over again. It might be maintained that, although in a minority, Catholic Switzerland is the real Switzerland, the rest of the country having wandered from the folkways of their ancestors into worldly bypaths. Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden, which formed the cradle of the Confederation, were and are overwhelmingly Catholic. Of the five Landsgemeinde cantons, three are of the same faith. Not only in democracy but also in devotion to home rule the Catholic cantons continue the traditions of the older Switzerland. Neither are their inhabitants remiss in meeting the essential duties imposed upon them by the existing order; they vote—almost too solidly at times; they pay their taxes; they keep up the birth-rate;[20] and they serve in the army. Neither pacifism nor revolutionary propaganda thrives in their midst; whether these be regarded as pathological or as progressive symptoms it is in the Protestant lowlands that one finds them most frequently. If conservatism be necessary in the state to balance radicalism, the Catholic party, more than any other, may lay claim to having furnished the element of stability from the earliest period of the federal republic to the present day. Since 1891 it has always been represented in the Federal Council; and as the later discussion of this party will show, its support is now more essential to the majority bloc in parliament than ever before. If, then, there are two Switzerlands from the social viewpoint, at least it may be said that they have established a *modus vivendi* in the political sphere.

Second among competing loyalties in the Swiss republic are those of an economic character, represented principally by the Socialist party and affiliated groups. As in other countries of Western Europe, it preaches class struggle and revolution, although neither of these terms need be taken as implying violence. Indeed, considering the composition of the party, a point which will be examined in some detail later, there is every reason to anticipate that it will confine itself to peaceful constitutional methods indefinitely. Although diametrically opposed to the aims of the Catholic Conservatives, the Socialists imitate their methods, being engaged in the formation of auxiliary associations of every sort. Solidly buttressed by a powerful trade-union organization, the party is building up educational groups, athletic and sport clubs, musical and dramatic societies in bewildering array. Should it ever succeed in these endeavors to the same extent as the Catholics, one might speak of three rather than two Switzerlands. Considerable as has been the enrolment of Socialists in auxiliary organizations, however, it seems unlikely that the party can ever set up a system of social groups segregated to anything like the same degree as that of the Catholics. Economic motives can scarcely be made to function so effectively as religious antipathies in causing masses of people to take the come-ye-out-from-among-them attitude. At present, of course, capitalists and social groups more or less in sympathy with the capitalistic order are largely prevalent; until such time as socialism has triumphed completely, both will remain in some numbers; as long as any of them remain, workers will have to enter into wage contracts with the former and relationships of one sort or another with the latter. Industrial laborers and public employees, the two classes from which the Swiss Socialist party recruits nearly the whole of its membership, do not live in remote mountain cantons such as are dominated by the Catholics; they live for the most part in urban centers of the plateau region, and are therefore open not only to party propaganda but also to the influence of other classes and to every manner of cultural influence, national as well as international.

---

[20] In Appenzell-Exterior, 88.2 per cent Protestant, the birth-rate from 1911 to 1920 was 19.9; in Appenzell-Interior, 94.6 per cent Catholic, 25.2 per thousand inhabitants.

Loyalty to Socialist party doctrine is, of course, more or less in conflict with loyalty to the present state order in Switzerland since the latter protects and fosters private property. But the conflict is not necessarily a *guerre à outrance* on all fronts. Largely engaged in public-ownership enterprises the existing state itself has a socialistic as well as an individualistic aspect. Much depends, moreover, on whose private property is to be taken in the future, in what amount, when, and on what terms. At the time railroads were nationalized, for example, it was the dominant Independent Democratic party, essentially the party of the business man, which, aided by such Socialist strength as then existed, put through the acquisitionist policy. On the other hand, when the Socialists promoted the capital tax levy initiative of 1922, which looked like an attack on private property generally, they were overwhelmingly defeated, a considerable part of their own following voting with the opposition. If the party is ever to gain support among the peasantry, it must learn to talk a different language, particularly with regard to small land holdings. Caution as to its public ownership and taxation proposals is, therefore, an essential condition of success, especially in a country like Switzerland, where so large a part of the population possesses a highly developed property sense and desires economic security profoundly, as shown by the deep interest taken in schemes for social insurance and by the large percentage of savings-bank depositors.

To the extent that states'-rights forms a part of the dominant loyalty of the Swiss, Socialist dogma with its strong centralizing, standardizing, and internationalist tenets, is again in the opposition. Conservative citizens possess a highly developed sense of national peculiarity and an extreme fear of foreign influence; hence to them socialism is almost as objectionable because of its alien origin as because of its economic policies. So far as the states' rights issue is concerned, however, compromise would seem to be possible. At the same time a Socialist majority of the future hands over large-scale industries to the federation, it could balance matters by transferring smaller business units to cantonal and communal governments, which indeed have already made considerable progress in the direction of public ownership with their power plants, and municipal water, lighting, and street railway enterprises. In all likelihood it will be easier to begin at the bottom of the administrative structure and work up, since socialism will have to gain further victories locally and cantonally before it can command a majority nationally.

Whether or not such equipoise could be maintained to the end, what Socialists purpose doing in Switzerland, as elsewhere, is in opposition to the capitalist state, not to the state as such, which under their sway is certain to become more powerful than ever before. From this point of view their loyalty is to the Swiss state as it may become rather than to the Swiss state as it is. Looking back over the history of their country, Socialists may assert that they have fallen heir to the rôle of the Regenerators of 1830–48, who made over a largely aristocratic Switzerland into a democratic Switzerland, doing some strenuous centralizing in the process also. Further, it is notorious that the radical reformers of that period were profoundly influenced by foreign theory, particularly that emanating from France.

If the Catholic party be given credit, as seems its due, for maintaining the balance of conservatism in Swiss affairs since 1848, it is impossible to deny credit to the Socialist party for contributing during recent decades the radical impulse without which political stagnation is likely to ensue. In their relations with the existing state there is, however, one significant difference between the two, namely that Catholic Conservatives have sat in the Federal Council for three decades, whereas Socialists have refused to do so hitherto. Nevertheless, a strong and growing element among the latter favors the abandonment of the policy of non-participation in the national executive, basing their arguments on the fact that it has been abandoned already in several cantons. Socialists have found it possible to form a part of legislative blocs in a number of other European countries and may yet do so in Switzerland. Since the strict parliamentary system does not exist in the latter country, such a coalition should be easier for them to enter than elsewhere.

As to the dominant loyalty of the Swiss, namely, loyalty to democracy, Socialists are in a position to lay claim to a high rating except in so far as a few extremists among them may run off into talk about direct action or dictatorship of the proletariat. Most utterances of the kind, however, come from the small and dwindling Communist party, and, as we shall have occasion to note later, are not to be taken too seriously. Without stressing the significance of a name, it is at least worth note that Socialists go under the official title of the Social Democratic party, and thus professedly are both democratic and socialistic. By virtue of their advocacy of woman suffrage they are, indeed, better democrats than most members of older parties. From the Socialist point of view the latter are only half-hearted democrats at best, since they are willing to accept the equalitarian principle in the political but not in the economic sphere. Between the prevailing conceptions on the subject and those held by Socialists there is one blood-relationship which may yet prove highly significant. Swiss of all classes, as was noted earlier, have long been inclined to distrust brilliant leadership, to think of their history and politics as determined by mass movements. Anticipating Marx on this point in so striking a manner, they would seem to be in somewhat greater danger than other peoples of conversion to his doctrines *in toto*.

A survey of the more obtrusive competing loyalties in Switzerland —states' rights sentiment, if, indeed, it belong in that category; racial and language differences which are scarcely marked enough at present to be considered; confessional and economic antagonisms—

indicates that, while the dividing lines go deep enough in certain cases, nothing of a really menacing character exists. When one considers the animosities stirred up by linguistic questions alone in many other countries, the Swiss give the impression of a happy family. To a remarkable degree also the competing loyalties offset each other, peasants and Catholics standing solidly against socialism, the states' rights west and center against the centralizing east, and so on. Finally, federal political activities bring all elements into contact with each other no matter how much they may be sundered in water-tight social or cantonal compartments. Of course a great deal of squabbling results —politics would not be politics otherwise—but also a great deal of respect for the strength, if not for the ideas, of opposing parties, and sometimes very curious alliances. Thus Socialists and peasants marched side by side on one issue at least, the grain monopoly amendment of 1926; also there have been occasions when Catholics and Socialists, in spite of their fundamental disapproval of each other, have combined in local politics. Barring a general European explosion, therefore, it seems altogether unlikely that any violent or even sudden change of any sort will take place in Switzerland in the near future— a conclusion which will be considerably strengthened by the study, to be presented later, of political parties in that country.

?

CHAPTER II

ECONOMIC GROUPS AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

No question is more frequently discussed in contemporary Switzerland than the increasing part played by economic motives in the politics of the country. Everybody concedes the fact, although reservations are usually made regarding the strength of other influences which affect the process—confessional, linguistic, regional, and so on. Conceding the fact, every possible view is taken of its probable effect, for weal or for woe, upon the future of the Swiss people, from the frankly I-told-you-so attitude of Socialists to the despairing prophecies of reactionaries who envisage the obliteration of every cherished national trait by an all-engulfing materialism.

For the study of the situation, facts and statistics are needed bearing, first, on the occupational groups of the country and, second, on their representation in political parties and legislative bodies, particularly the National Council. A wealth of literature is available in the latter field, much of it controversial in character. As to the former, it is unfortunate that the most recent industrial census of Switzerland for which returns are available dates back to 1905. Upon a suggestion originating with the International Agrarian Institute in Rome, which desired a world-wide survey of conditions in that field to be made by all the governments of the world at approximately the same time, the Federal Council lately ordered its statistical office to undertake an intensive study not only of farming but also of manufacturing, commerce, transportation and all other branches of Swiss business, as of the date August 22, 1929.

Unfortunately, the results of the general industrial census of 1929—for that is what the work in hand amounts to—will not be available for a year or two. Taking each business establishment as a unit, it undoubtedly will present a fairly complete picture of economic conditions throughout the country. Pending the publication of this report, one is obliged to fall back on returns obtained at the most recent regular decennial census—that of 1920. Of course, the latter are based not upon schedules filled out by managers of business establishments but upon answers given by individual citizens regarding their employment to enumerators of the usual Swiss type, who, by the way, are often village schoolmasters. However unsatisfactory figures gathered on this basis may be to economists, they are in some ways more valuable from the political point of view than a thoroughgoing industrial census would be, the chief objection to the statistics now available being that they are nearly a decade old. Disregarding minor subdivisions for the time being, the occupational groups of Switzerland in 1920 and the number employed in each were as given in Table I.

Owing to the almost total lack of mineral resources in Switzerland, 96.2 per cent of the 492,306 persons engaged in agriculture and other extractive industries in 1920 fall to the former category alone. Of the remainder, two-thirds are employed in forestry, hunting, and fishing.

TABLE I

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS OF SWITZERLAND AND PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN EACH FOR 1920*

Occupational Groups	Number of Persons Employed	Percentage
Agriculture and other extractive industries	492,306	26.58
Manufacturing	827,624	44.69
Commerce	217,152	11.73
Transportation	91,297	4.93
Public administration and liberal professions	98,895	5.34
Recipients of fixed incomes (*Rentiers*) and pensions	73,206	3.95
Various	51,573	2.78
Total	1,852,053	100.00

* Condensed from table, pp. 38, 39, *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1928* (Bern: Stämpfli, 1929).

In "mining and other exploitation of the dead earth's crust" *(Bergbau und sonstige Ausbeutung der toten Erdrinde)*, to quote a somewhat unusual statistical caption, less than 6,000 are employed, a figure eloquently expressing the dependence of the country upon foreign sources of supply for such basic commodities as coal and iron. Although the 473,589 persons who form the overwhelming majority of this occupational group are referred to as "peasants," the term as used in Switzerland has no connotation of tenant subjection. To a very large degree they are independent proprietors engaged in farming and dairying, the tendency of late being toward the latter. Small holdings and intensive cultivation are the rule. Excellent training for every branch of agricultural work is supplied by numerous cantonal schools.

Nevertheless, Swiss agriculture is decreasing in importance and profitableness, facts which, taken in connection with the high average intelligence of those engaged in it, go far toward explaining the extremely well-organized and effective peasant movement in politics. At the adoption of the first federal constitution in 1848, two-thirds of the population made a living by farming. Fifty years later the proportion had fallen to one-third. The absolute number of persons so engaged was almost the same in 1920 as in 1900; but, relative to the total gainfully employed in all occupations, the percentage declined during these two decades from 31.3 to 25.6. During the World War Swiss farmers enjoyed a rather fictitious prosperity, in consequence of which some unwise investments were made in land and equipment. Since 1918, constantly falling prices have greatly increased the difficulties of their situation. Fearing something of the sort, the national dairymen's association had the foresight to collect during the fat years a fund of several million francs to be drawn upon during lean years when milk prices fell below cost of production. At present the fund is being depleted rapidly with the prospect that dairying and cheese-making will soon be face to face with a serious crisis.

In spite of the great preponderance of the peasant type of life, manufacturing had already taken root to a considerable degree in the Switzerland of 1848. It is a curious fact that much of the capital so employed at first was acquired by the hiring of mercenary troops to foreign princes. In contracts with the latter it was customary to exact not only thumping payments in hard cash but also agreements to purchase large quantities of Swiss products. Although deficient in coal and iron, the country was rich in water power, cost of living was low, population relatively dense. Railroads came comparatively late, largely owing to difficulties of construction in a mountainous country; but with the completion of a fairly adequate network during the fifties and sixties, industrial development was given a new impetus. Long before the turn of the century it had outstripped agriculture in the number of persons employed, its percentage of the total being 46.1 in 1900 and 46.3 in 1910. Subsequently there has been a slight relative decline, which, however, is more apparent than real, since the absolute number engaged in manufacturing continued to grow slowly between 1910 and 1920. It would be more correct to say that during the last decade manufacturing development as a whole did not keep pace with that in commerce and transportation, largely because of considerable shifts which took place in its various branches. Thus metallurgy, machine and tool building, which, together with the chemical industries, are now leading all other branches, increased rapidly during the ten years from 1910 to 1920, whereas textiles, clothing, and the building trades, fell off to an even greater degree.

Although often opposed in political interest, there are a number of rather close similarities between Swiss agriculture and Swiss manufacturing. Both operate with relatively small units, employ highly trained workers, and produce quality goods which in large part must be marketed abroad. The latter condition in particular puts all the force of an urgent bread-and-butter motive behind the Swiss inclination, abnormally strong for other reasons, in favor of peace and neutrality; it even fosters a sort of cosmopolitan conservatism. For without general economic stability among the larger and richer nations of the world, foreign customers will not be numerous and prosperous enough to buy Swiss articles of luxury; moreover, in case of war their money will be needed for necessities and taken by government for munitions while boundary lines and sea routes will be closed by blockades.

In the case both of agriculture and manufacturing, Swiss technical schools have turned out highly competent workers in such large numbers that many of them, unable to find scope for their abilities in the small country of their birth, were forced to emigrate, thus leaving unfilled places which have attracted low-grade workers from neighboring countries, chiefly Italy and South Germany. To a degree unusual elsewhere much manufacturing has been carried on in Switzerland, and for that matter still is, although to a less extent than formerly, by peasants who take materials home and are aided by their wives and children in elaborating them. House work of this character has led to many abuses in other countries: because of the low grade of skill required, sweating, starvation wages, and child labor have commonly resulted. In Switzerland similar complaints are sometimes heard—straw-plaiting and cigar-making apparently being the worst offenders—but they are much less frequent than elsewhere, undoubtedly because in part the work has required high skill as, for example, in the case of watch-making, and because of the income derived at the same time from farming and dairying. Credit must also be given to democratic conditions and labor organization which made it possible for workers to protect themselves against exploitation. As a matter of fact, house work is often praised by the Swiss on the grounds that it keeps the family together and preserves certain beautiful peasant arts and crafts which have been destroyed in other countries by factory production.

Too much emphasis should not be laid on the smallness of the unit characteristic of Swiss industry. It has certain advantages—encouraging enterprise and invention, and facilitating the production of distinctive articles in great variety. Such disadvantages as might result are corrected to a considerable degree by producers' associations and organizations of every conceivable sort. For example, Swiss cheese, or rather "Switzerland cheese"—to use the officially protected title of the only genuine article—is made in some three thousand *Käsereien*, many of them quite small; but it is gathered, tested, and marketed abroad under the auspices of an extremely powerful and resourceful association, the advertisements of which, familiar to American readers of journals with large circulations, are little less than works of genius and have proved extremely effective in overcoming high tariff rates and in combating cheap imitations produced by Dutch, German, Scandinavian, and domestic firms.[1]

Commerce and transportation together employed in 1920 one-sixth of the total number of persons gainfully employed in Switzerland, both showing large increases of personnel from 1900 to 1920. With regard to the former, the comment already made concerning small units, skilled workers, and widespread organization in industry also applies, the chief peculiarity exhibited by the group being the disproportionately high percentage (34.3) engaged in catering to the "industry of foreigners" *(Fremdenindustrie, industrie des étrangers)* in hotels, pensions, and restaurants. Owing to the nationalization of railways, transportation supplies the one indubitable case of large-scale industry Switzerland has to offer. Of the 91,297 workers engaged at the date of the last census in this field, 76,229 were employed by public transportation enterprises, which, of course, include in addition to the federal railways the large number of municipal street-railway systems. The observation made above with regard to the dependence of Swiss industry upon foreign customers and its consequent interest in peace and stability abroad applies with even greater force to commerce and transportation. Swiss hotel enterprise was almost completely prostrated by the World War. Railroad officials watch the ebb and flow of tourist travel with the most careful attention, studying it in every detail through elaborate statistical tables and graphic charts. Shopkeepers also pray for fine, dry summer days, which are not any too plentiful in Switzerland; but rarely are their supplications so successful as in 1928, when there was so much "tourist weather" that crops failed and the peasants were almost ruined.

The group, or rather collection of groups brought together under the heading "public administration and liberal professions," is not only large (at the last census it actually exceeded by several thousands the number engaged in transportation) but it also showed a more rapid rate of growth between 1900 and 1920 than any other. Without doubt the latter development reflects the extension of public functions going on in Switzerland; the former may be taken as the consequence of that educational overproduction which is so often referred to by critics of the university system. So great is the importance of this group in the political life of the country that its composition is presented in some detail in Table II.

---

[1] Cf. the pamphlet published by the Switzerland Cheese Association, 105 Hudson Street, New York City, entitled *The Story of Switzerland Cheese.*

From the point of view of civic training, by far the most important fact revealed by Table II is that more than half of the professional men and women of Switzerland are in the service of the state. Adding together all those engaged in public administration (26.1 per cent); the overwhelming majority of the teachers (30.8 per cent) who, of course, belong to the public school system; the considerable number of preachers in established churches; and of workers in public sanitation; one obtains a sum close to three-fifths of the total of professional workers. It does not follow, of course, that the foregoing are superior in civic knowledge to, say, a lawyer or doctor in private practice; nevertheless, the fact that one's salary check is drawn on the public treasury does materially enhance interest in public affairs.

TABLE II

Number of Persons Engaged in Public Administration and Liberal Professions in Switzerland, 1920

Profession	Number of Persons	Percentage of Each Profession to Total
Public administration	26,019	26.1
Teaching	30,481	30.8
Law	6,711	6.8
Medicine	17,442	17.6
Religion	5,136	5.3
Fine arts	6,545	6.7
Other liberal professions	6,561	6.7
Total	98,895	100.0

It is to be regretted that the number of professional secretarial workers, who are extremely influential in business, the labor movement, and politics, is not separately stated, probably being included under the heading "other liberal professions." Among further miscellaneous items presented in Table I, one is impressed by the large number of persons in Switzerland (73,206) who are not gainfully employed, being recipients of fixed incomes *(Rentiers)*, or pensioners. Personal service accounted for 20,523 women and 5,389 men; in institutions there were 26,381, of whom 19,087 were women.

The increasing influence of economic factors in Swiss party life is, as we have noted earlier, conceded by all observers. It is manifest not only in the policies put forward but also in the personnel of legislative bodies, particularly of the National Council. Elected by universal manhood suffrage, the latter is to an unusual extent what Mirabeau asserted every national chamber should be—a mirror reflecting *in petto* all classes and every shade of opinion in the country.

While this assertion might have been made with reservations regarding the National Council during the first seven decades of its existence, it has been true to a much greater extent since the general election of 1919, when proportional representation was employed for the first time. Whatever political objections may be made to the latter device, unquestionably it has diversified the personnel of Swiss legislative bodies. Since 1919 each canton has constituted an electoral district. Owing to the large size of several of the cantons, fractional parties and groups have been encouraged to place candidates in the field, not always, however, with success. Thus, Bern elects thirty-four and Zürich twenty-seven members, which means that a group capable of casting slightly more than one-thirty-fourth or one-twenty-seventh of the vote in these cantons, respectively, obtains one seat in the National Council. Of course the cases cited are extreme, but there are three cantons each electing from ten to twenty members, and ten each electing from five to ten members. At the other end of the scale are the four which elect one representative each, Uri, Obwald, Nidwald, and Inner Appenzell, in all of which, however, social and economic conditions are extremely simple. Just as in the case of the Senate of the United States, each Swiss canton elects two members to the Council of States. For this reason the latter, which is the less numerous branch of the Swiss federal legislature, is not so perfect a mirror as the National Council of the social and economic groups existing throughout the country.

Given proportional representation, the large number of parties in Switzerland, parties which, moreover, are decentralized in organization to an extreme degree, assures the election of representatives of every political, economic, social, intellectual, and religious tendency. Behind the parties, sometimes closely affiliated with them, in other cases acting independently, are unions, associations, and clubs of all conceivable kinds, which commonly maintain paid professional secretariats and know how to make themselves felt politically.

While in the foregoing particulars political conditions are such as to favor the mirroring in the National Council of the various classes existing throughout the country according to the strength of each, there are certain minor cases in which Switzerland excludes types of representatives admitted elsewhere. First, woman suffrage, active or passive, exists in a few local subdivisions only, and as a result there are no women legislators either in the federal or cantonal parliaments. Second, by Article 75 of the Swiss constitution no one can be a member of the National Council who at the same time is in priestly orders or actively engaged in performing the duties of a minister of the gospel.[2] Federal civil officials are also excluded from the National Council by Article 77 of the constitution. On the other hand, army officers are eligible and in fact form a considerable percentage of the membership of both houses.

The highly representative character of the National Council has recently received thoroughgoing analysis at the hands of Dr. Fritz Giovanoli, whose study of Swiss general elections from 1919 to 1928, inclusive, might well serve as a model for similar much-needed statistical investigations in the United States.[3] With slight modifications of his figures made in order to render them more easily comparable with American conditions, he classifies the one hundred and ninety-eight members of the present National Council, elected in 1928, according to profession or occupation, as shown in Table III.

Before undertaking the interpretation of these figures, it should be explained that Dr. Giovanoli uses as the basis of his classification the *present* occupation, thus leaving out of account earlier activities of members of the National Council. Nevertheless, it is apparently quite as true in Switzerland as in the United States that the earlier occupations of a legislator may have as much or more to do with his political availability as the profession he is pursuing at the time of his election. Study of the pages of the *Jahrbuch der eidgenössischen Räte*, which corresponds to our own *Congressional Directory*, shows that the many members of the National Council who were cantonal or municipal officials at the time of their election had pursued a variety of occupations before they entered politics in their own local districts. Similarly, many who are recorded by Dr. Giovanoli as editors or professional secretarial workers reached such positions because of certain earlier experience as laborers and trade-union officials or as salaried employees of commercial and industrial undertakings. In the United States, as is well known, a large number of Congressmen from rural districts go through an experience-pattern somewhat as follows: farm boy, school teacher, lawyer, district attorney or holder of some other local or state office, election to the House of Representatives. Judging from a general study of the membership of their national legislatures, however, one would find that the fluidity of economic life, as one would expect, is considerably greater in the United States than in Switzerland; in any event, frequent changes of occupation in earlier life and the pursuit of two or more lines of business at one time are much more common in the former country. A study of representative bodies on the basis of their occupation shows clearly that certain types of pursuits (e.g., law, secretarial work, journalism in the case of Switzerland) have a greater affinity for politics than others. Much additional light might be thrown on the matter, however, by an investigation of the earlier pursuits and social origins generally of legislators. A study of the latter character is promised by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, to be based on the results of the general election of 1931.

---

[2] See the author's *Governments and Parties in Switzerland*, p. 76, as to the manner in which this provision has sometimes been evaded by Protestant clergymen.

[3] *Statistik der Nationalratswahlen, 1919, 1922, 1925, und 1928*, "Schweizerische Statistische Mitteilungen," hrsg. Eidg. Stat. Amt., XI. Jhrg. (1928), Heft 1.

TABLE III

Swiss National Council Elected 1928

Profession or Occupation	Number	Percentage
I. Lawyers and legal pursuits......	48	24.2
II. Administrative officials and civil servants......................	44	22.2
III. Farmers and farm managers.....	26	13.1
IV. Secretaries....................	24	12.1
V. Manufacturers, merchants, proprietors of independent businesses	18	9.2
VI. Editors, publishers............	12	6.2
VII. Professors, teachers............	9	4.5
VIII. Other liberal professions........	9	4.5
IX. Employees and workmen........	5	2.5
X. Recipients of fixed incomes from property (*Rentiers*)............	3	1.5
Total.....................	198	100.0

Turning now to the details of Table III, one will note that lawyers head the list, with forty-eight seats in the National Council, or 24.2 per cent of its membership. Curiously enough, Dr. Giovanoli does not include nine judges in the total of forty-eight stated above; but on the other hand, he reckons that fully seventy, or 35 per cent of the membership, either studied or practiced law at some time during their careers, a third of them turning later to other pursuits, principally administrative office or business.

In Switzerland, therefore, as in so many other countries, the legal profession is shown to have the greatest affinity for parliamentary service, doubtless for reasons that are too commonplace to need recapitulation here. The homely Swiss expression "*Fürsprech*," for lawyer, illustrates these reasons better perhaps than our own term or the Latin-derived *Advokat* of High German. It is fairly obvious, however, that many lawyers sit in the National Council in part only because of their profession. The directorships and managerial posts they hold in business enterprises may be of even greater significance. It is further noteworthy that Swiss parties vary greatly in their attitude toward lawyers as representatives. The fractions in the National Council of the Catholic and Independent Democratic parties, both conservative in general outlook, are made up of lawyers to the extent of 43.5 and 24.1 per cent, respectively. On the other hand, of the thirty-one members of the Peasant party, despite its conservative inclinations, two only are lawyers. Although the Socialist party is often derided as a "wastebasket for discredited and briefless barristers," its fraction of fifty in the National Council contains but five practicing attorneys and two judges.

It may well be argued that a proportion of one-quarter lawyers in a legislative body is not excessive; indeed, that it is sufficient only to insure a proper degree of efficiency in the process of statute-making. Nevertheless, there are a few political grumblers in Switzerland who object frequently and strenuously to what they deem the undue number of representatives of the legal profession in the National Council. As against this criticism, it may be observed, first, that with the advent of new types of occupations the percentage of lawyers is visibly declining in the federal chamber; second, that it is much smaller than in the parliamentary bodies of other states. The high standards of the profession in Switzerland, the general absence of hustling and chicane among its practitioners, and the popular respect it enjoys deprive the grumblers mentioned above of any considerable following.

The second largest professional group in the National Council, amounting to 22.2 per cent of the total membership, is made up of cantonal officials (13.6 per cent), city officials (5.5 per cent), and civil servants under one or the other (3.1 per cent). Among the first mentioned are included heads of departments and other members of administrative boards; the second are mayors or heads of municipal departments. A considerable percentage of the lawyers and smaller percentages of those of other professions in our House of Representatives have held city, county, or state offices prior to their promotion to Washington. In Switzerland the interesting fact to note in this connection is that a relatively large number of holders of local and cantonal offices sit *at the same time* as members of the federal legislature at Bern. Undoubtedly the small size of the latter country goes far to explain the difference.

Even from the Swiss point of view, however, the presence in the National Council of so large a proportion of cantonal officials is a somewhat unusual condition. Traditionally and by constitutional provisions the Council of States was intended to function within the federal government as an organ of representation for the cantons. As a matter of fact, it does so quite effectively, a still greater proportion of its members than in the National Council holding important cantonal offices concurrently. What the Swiss founding-fathers of 1848 did not anticipate was the election to the more numerous branch of so considerable a number of cantonal officials.

Nevertheless, the latter development is easily comprehensible. It is customary in Switzerland to refer to the cantons as laboratories in which political experiments are made, which, if successful, may be taken up on a national scale. Similarly, the cantons act as experimental stations for the development of political leadership. Men who succeed in this service or in the service of municipalities possess a distinct advantage as candidates for the National Council. Moreover, cantonal and local governments are not averse to having thoroughly informed representatives looking after their interests at Bern. Whether in the long run the states or the federation derive most benefit from the arrangement is a subject of much dispute in Switzerland, a current view which is widely held being that the latter is relentlessly bled for money in the form of subsidies, receiving in return very small concessions of power most gudgingly granted.

In the opinion of Dr. Giovanoli the concentration in the same hands of local and state with federal office is an illustration of the sociological law of oligarchy characteristic of democratic party systems which was enunciated by Professor Robert Michels.[4] To prevent such accumulations of power, many cantonal constitutions provide that a certain number only of the members of their administrative councils shall at the same time belong to the Federal Assembly; others, e.g., Ticino, forbid outright the acceptance of a parliamentary mandate by any of their *Regierungsräte.* Nevertheless, both constitutional provisions and political practice in Switzerland are much more tolerant of dual office-holding than in the United States. Many of our state constitutions prohibit it, using such expressions as "lucrative offices" or "offices of trust or profit" under the two jurisdictions, in some cases mentioning specifically membership in Congress. Even if there were no such restrictions, an American politician would find it difficult to combine the holding of state and federal office at the same time. Certainly his rivals would consider it highly unprofessional conduct, evidence of a degree of hoggishness reprehensible even in a member of their not too unselfish fraternity. No doubt our sacred dogmas of states' rights and separation of powers would also be quoted against any such practice; moreover, public opinion would consider it contrary to fair play.

---

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 58*. See also Robert Michels, *Political Parties* (translation by E. and C. Paul).

Farmers make up the third largest group in the National Council, amounting to 13.1 per cent of its membership. For their unusual legislative strength in Switzerland the Peasants' party, which entered federal politics first in the campaign of 1919, is chiefly responsible. Of the twenty-six national councilors belonging to that party, fifteen are farmers. The agricultural voter is cultivated sedulously by the two other conservative parties, however. Of the fifty-eight Independent Democratic members of the National Council, six are farmers; of the forty-six Catholic Conservative members, four. On the other hand, the Social Democrats, whose policies are strongly industrial-urban, and hence opposed to peasant interests, have not a single peasant among their fifty representatives at Bern.

One of the most interesting groups in the National Council is that made up of professional secretaries. Although of recent advent in the national legislature, they number already twenty-four members, 12.1 per cent of the total. Their profession itself is a quite new one, yet the influence they exert (perhaps one should say, "which is exerted through them") is phenomenal. Every form of social organization in Switzerland—political, economic, religious, intellectual, or what not—hires a paid professional secretary just as soon as its funds permit. As the organization grows, he is given assistants, until finally an office force running into the scores may be necessary to carry on its work. Well educated, specially trained, well paid, and permanently appointed, these professional secretaries become extremely competent. They are encyclopedias of information regarding their organization and all its relationships. They are fertile in devising policies and presenting them either to outsiders (legislative chambers, administrative boards, public meetings) or to insiders (the members of their association). While employed to work under direction, their long experience and superior opportunities for acquiring information give them a certain advantage over the rank and file—so much so, indeed, that at times one receives the impression that it is not so much the organization as the secretaries themselves who give orders—and execute them, too.

Now the Swiss would not be Swiss if they did not protest against the apparent concentration of powers in the hands of professional secretaries. Complaints are common anyway that politics is being subjected to economic interests, and the "*Sekretärenwirtschaft*" is pointed to as evidence in support of the accusation. In rebuttal it is argued that new organizations of all kinds formed by citizens of various classes are bound to seek and find political expression, that it is only fair they should have it even at the cost of compelling certain older types of representatives to move aside, and finally that the emergence of professional secretaries in legislative bodies proves the adaptability of the constitution to changing social forces. As compared with the use of furtive or corrupt influence, it is certainly preferable that paid representatives of the more powerful associations should sit openly in the chamber where their activities are at all times aboveboard and subject to criticism.

In Switzerland, as elsewhere, parliamentary institutions are often attacked on the grounds that they have become unrepresentative and inefficient. The time has come, it is asserted, when they should give way to some form of functional representation, particularly of the more important economic groups. Defenders of the existing order in Switzerland are able to make a highly effective reply to criticisms of the preceding character. They simply point to the presence of professional secretaries in the National Council as proof that the democratic form of representation prevailing in their country lends itself readily to the election to parliament of men who do in fact stand for the interests of all important economic and other social groups.[5]

As a matter of fact, the comparatively few secretaries who represent constituencies in the National Council are not the only members of their profession who exert great political influence. No measure can come before the federal legislature affecting any organization without the immediate appearance upon the scene at Bern of the professional secretaries it employs. And the latter are alleged to be so thoroughly informed and so persuasive that the ordinary political member of the chamber is seldom able to argue effectively against them. Frequently, however, all he has to do is to sit in judgment upon the rival claims of two or more associations, each represented by paid agents. In this connection it is an interesting and reassuring fact that, unlike some kinds of lobbyists elsewhere, Swiss secretaries assail legislators with arguments only. Charges of bribery on their part are unknown.

---

[5] For a particularly able statement of this view, see the letter of Alfred Piguet contributed to the *Journal de Genève,* August 10, 1927, as one of a very interesting and scholarly series published under the general heading "Enquête sur la démocratie."

The twenty-four professional agents who have seats in the National Council fall into three classes: (1) ten secretaries of labor-unions; (2) eleven secretaries of business and employers' associations; and (3) three party secretaries. As it happens, therefore, the forces of capital and labor, as represented by the first and second classes named, are, for the time being, nearly equal. All ten of the trade-union secretaries, as would be expected, are members of the Social Democratic fraction in the National Council. The eleven representatives of business and employers' associations are divided between the other parties as follows: Independent Democratic, five; Peasants' party, five; Catholic Conservative, one. Of the third class named above—secretaries of party organizations—two are Social Democrats and one is a member of the Peasants' party.

The eighteen business men who hold seats in the National Council, with one exception, are divided almost equally between manufacturing, merchandising, and various forms of banking and investment enterprises. At present only one representative of the hotel industry sits at Bern. Possibly the interest of those who follow this calling is largely with local government; at least they are reported to exercise strong, if not dominant, influence in the centers of tourist resort. At one of the latter a battle of Homeric proportions was waged some years ago between innkeepers, on the one hand, who wanted benches placed along the lake-side and in parkways for the benefit of their guests, and taxpayers, on the other, who were opposed tooth and nail to such unheard-of extravagance. The hotel party won, since which time the benches have been occupied, not without considerable satisfaction, principally by the local citizens who objected to their purchase.

The large influence of editors, journalists, and publishers in Switzerland, discussed at length elsewhere,[6] is confirmed by the presence in the National Council of twelve members at present engaged in these occupations. Half of them belong to the Social Democratic party. "The editor and publisher," to quote Dr. Giovanoli, "especially in

---

[6] See chap. xi.

Switzerland where the overwhelming majority of papers play the part of outspoken organs of political opinion, is himself a sort of representative of the people." Hence the high affinity of members of the journalistic profession for public, and particularly legislative, office.

Teachers and professors are far more influential than their quota of only nine members in the National Council would indicate.[7] Since the democratic movement of the sixties was inaugurated by that remarkable schoolmaster of Rural Basel, Christoph Roll, they have played their full part in practical politics. Many of them, however, find it impossible to leave their pedagogical posts long enough to attend legislative sessions at Bern. Although statistics are not available, it is well known that the percentage of teachers in cantonal and local legislatures is much higher than in the National Council.

Among the nine members of other liberal professions, favor is shown particularly to medical practitioners, six of whom are at present in the National Council, two of these being veterinarians. Two engineers and one architect complete the group.

Employees and workmen find it almost impossible to secure sufficient leave from their daily labors to accept election to the federal legislature. Nevertheless, there are now five members of these categories in the National Council, all belonging to the Social Democratic fraction. In general, however, the whole fifty representatives of that party may be considered parliamentary advocates of the cause of urban workers. At the other end of the economic scale three members of the National Council, all belonging to the Catholic Conservative party, are classified as recipients of fixed incomes from property *(Rentiers)*.

Comparing the Swiss National Council with the American House of Representatives, one notes immediately the large preponderance of lawyers, 61.5 per cent in the latter as against 24.2 per cent in the former.[8] On the other hand, the category of state and local office-holders is five times as large in Switzerland (22.2 per cent) as in the United States. In spite of widespread agricultural distress the percentage of farmers in Congress is only 3.7, as compared with 13.1 in the National Council. Secretarial work in the United States has as yet attained little of the importance it enjoys in Europe; and one is not surprised to find a single member only of the House of Representatives (0.2 per cent) who, as "officer and representative of local, state, district, and international labor organizations," might be considered to qualify in that category, as compared with the twenty-four (12.1 per cent) of the National Council. Next to lawyers, business men show the largest percentage (16.8) in the lower house at Washington. In the corresponding body at Bern they rank fifth, with a percentage of 9.2. Editors and publishers are more favored in Switzerland: 6.2 per cent as compared with 3.7 in the United States. Teachers come out almost equally well in the two countries: 4.5 per cent in the former and 4.0 per cent in the latter. The difference is slight as regards other liberal professions: 3.5 per cent of the members of the House of Representatives being so classified as compared with 4.5 per cent in the case of the National Council. Laborers and employees can scarcely be considered to form a group in Congress, although two of its members (0.5 per cent)—one a locomotive engineer at the time of his election, the other a paper maker by trade—may be so regarded. For reasons stated above, the number of workers in the Swiss National Council is small; nevertheless, five (2.5 per cent) are so classified. It would hardly occur to any American legislator to admit himself to be "a recipient of fixed income from property"; probably it would be politically inexpedient to do so. At any rate, Congress possesses no avowed "*Rentiers*," whereas three Swiss national councilors (1.5 per cent) recorded themselves as belonging to this economic group. Finally, there is no counterpart in the Swiss chamber for the group of eight women members (1.9 per cent) of the House of Representatives. To classify the latter by occupation seemed impossible; in all but one or two cases apparently the determining factor was relationship as widow to a deceased congressman whose place was thus filled by his grieving former constituents. Two of the ladies possessed the distinction of being daughters of famous national political leaders of the last generation, although, to be fair, it must be said that one of them had fully demonstrated the possession of unusual political ability in her own right.

---

[7] On the social prestige and influence of teachers in Switzerland, see chap. vii.

[8] Percentages for the House of Representatives are based upon a study of the *Congressional Director,* 71st Congress, 1st Session, May, 1929, supplemented by *Who's Who* of 1929. As closely as possible, the writer followed the classification of Dr. Giovanoli in assembling his figures.

Arguing from such data as the foregoing with regard to the relative importance of social groups is a ticklish matter. It seems fairly evident, however, that the legal profession plays a much more prominent part in the United States than in Switzerland. Admitting that many lawyers in Congress were sent there not so much as representatives of their profession as of certain business or other connections, the fact that their percentage of the membership is two and a half times as great as in the National Council must signify a widespread popular confidence in their availability as legislators. Or, to put the matter in another way, Swiss voters of various groups, e.g., farmers, laborers, and to a less degree business men, seem to be shifting their confidence from lawyers to members of their own class or to professional secretaries trained in its service. Moreover, the farmers and laborers of Switzerland have developed class consciousness to a degree unknown in the United States and have built up strongly organized parties which enhance their social and political power. Nor should one forget in this connection the influence of the multiparty system, proportional representation, and the initiative and referendum, all of which favor the political solidarity and activity of certain minority groups.

It seems beyond question, also, that business men are much more powerful in the United States than in Switzerland. There is substantial respect for them and the interests they represent in the latter country, but nothing approaching the quasi-reverence paid them in America; nor do their claims have undue precedence over the claims of other classes—peasants and laborers, for example. If lawyers are left out of account both in Congress and in the National Council, the percentage of business men in the former (43.6) is more than three and a half times as great as in the latter (12.0). Apparently, also, business men in the United States are coming to depend more and more upon members of their own class for political representation and are finding increased popular support in so doing. Their group in Congress is not only growing, but it is, indeed, the only one besides that of the lawyers which has any considerable number of members. Already they have a strength (72), more than one-fourth that of the legal contingent (264). While no other occupational group can muster as much as 5 per cent of the total membership of the House of Representatives, business men now make up 16.8 per cent of that body.[9] In short, therefore, the greater power and prestige of business interests in the United States are effectively mirrored in Congress. Of course it is true that Swiss business is represented by members belonging to other occupations, notably by lawyers and professional secretaries; but the same condition exists in the United States, probably to an even greater degree because of the larger number of lawyers who sit in the House of Representatives.

---

[9] The seventy-two business men in the present (71st) Congress may be assigned as follows: banking and insurance, twenty-one; real estate, contracting and building, fourteen; merchants, fourteen; manufacturers, eight; mining and oil development, three; accountants, two; public utilities, two; one each in automobiles, shipping and marine insurance, printing, and hotels. Four did not state the nature of the business in which they were engaged at the time of election. The striking fact revealed by the foregoing figures is the relatively small number of manufacturers whose influence in Congress, as everyone knows, is tremendous. As legislative possibilities, probably they suffer from the fact that their business brings them into contact with relatively fewer local voters than that of bankers, insurance and real estate men, or merchants.

Similarly, the much greater influence of local and state officials, professional secretaries, journalists, and farmers and laborers in Switzerland, as mirrored in legislative percentages, is confirmed by observation and current report. Of these the three former doubtlessly owe their prestige largely to special training and knowledge; the two latter, rather to voting mass, organization, and party leadership. It was observed above that the percentage of professors and teachers in Congress (4.0) is nearly as large as in the National Council (4.5). Nevertheless, one gains the impression that their influence is much greater in Switzerland than in the United States.[10] Although statistics are lacking, it is probably not true that our state legislatures or municipal councils contain anything like so large percentages of teachers as similar bodies in Switzerland. As to other liberal professions, the slightly larger proportion present in the National Council is hardly sufficient to warrant inferences regarding social power or prestige. It is a curious fact that both in Switzerland and the United States medical practitioners form the largest single group included under this category.[11]

The argument cited above to the effect that a percentage of lawyers not exceeding 24.2, as in the Swiss National Council, is necessary to assure the quality of the legislative product seems convincing enough. It would scarcely occur to anyone, even in the United States, however, to maintain that a percentage of lawyers so high as in the House of Representatives (61.5) was essential to that end. On the contrary, it gives an impression of the gross exaggeration of one profession at the cost of all others; further, it raises a question as to the political capacity of these other professions and occupations. Even if our laws were rendered thereby perfect in form and expression, which is scarcely the case, might they not lack important viewpoints which could be contributed by a larger representation of other groups? Is it likely that out of a total membership of four hundred and thirty-five, the sixteen farmers, sixteen teachers, twelve editors, and two employees who sit in Congress are sufficient in number to grasp and present the varying interests and opinions of the millions of citizens who follow these occupations?

---

[10] See chap. vii.

[11] Details for members of other liberal professions seated in the National Council were given on p. 33 above. In the present (71st) Congress fifteen members (3.5 per cent) were so classified, of whom seven were medical practitioners (one of them a dentist), three were engaged in mining engineering, one in forestry, three were preachers, and one an actor-manager at the time of their election.

Owing to the manifest difference of conditions between the two countries, undue emphasis should not be laid on the foregoing comparisons of personnel in the Swiss National Council and the American House of Representatives. Nevertheless, they do bring out certain broad contrasts which are illuminating. Less objection can be made to comparisons between Swiss economic groups at large and the number of representatives of each in the National Council. Unfortunately, detailed statistics are not available as yet from the former field. Comparing Tables I and II, presented on pages 29 and 33 above, however, it appears that, strongly organized as are the peasants in certain parts of the country, their percentage in the more numerous branch of the federal legislature (13.1) is only one-half of that (26.5) of their class to the total number of persons gainfully employed in Switzerland. With the extension of their party to new areas, a greater degree of parity may result; but of course efforts to establish it will be fought vigorously by both Catholic Conservatives and Independent Democrats. As to the business class, including under that heading those employed in manufacturing and merchandising with proprietors of independent concerns, the percentage to the total gainfully employed is 56.42, as compared with only 11.7 in the National Council. Obviously, however, the latter figure is far from representing the real influence of the economic factors concerned in Swiss political life. Moreover, it is made up of two elements pretty sharply opposed to each other—employers and employed—the latter, although enormously in the majority outside, contributing a fifth only of the number of seats credited to this group in the National Council. As already indicated, the employers are supported by many lawyer members of the federal legislature and to a less extent by professional secretaries, while laborers and employees enjoy the advocacy of their own secretarial contingent and of the whole Social Democratic fraction. But the most striking disparity revealed by the two tables concerns the combined groups of highly educated workers. Of the total number gainfully employed in Switzerland, public administration and liberal professions account for only 5.34 per cent; whereas in the National Council the quota of lawyers, administrative officers, secretaries, editors, teachers, and other liberal professions is 69.2 per cent. If lawyers, with their special capacity for advocating the cause of others, predominated unduly in the latter quota, one might hesitate to interpret it as a vote of confidence by the

Swiss electorate in the educated class of the country as a whole. When one considers that members of the bar form only slightly more than a third of it, however, such an interpretation appears to be not without warrant. Certainly it is wholly consonant with that belief in education which is one of the most striking of Swiss traits.

In conclusion it may be said that the Swiss National Council contains a balanced diversity of professions and occupations, none of them exceeding one-fourth the membership, and several of them numerous enough to have to be reckoned with on all questions. The national estate is not turned over largely to the stewardship of lawyers; on the contrary, there are enough peasants, business men, public administrators, editors, and teachers to present adequately the opinions and interests of each of these occupations and professions. Fundamentally, as we have already had occasion to note, this condition is due to the existence in Switzerland of a large number of groups, each well organized, well officered, politically informed, and quite capable of looking out for itself in matters of state. So much is made clear by the statistics presented in Dr. Giovanoli's recent study of National Council elections from 1919 to 1928. Consideration of Swiss party structure will further strengthen the conclusion stated above.

CHAPTER III

SWISS POLITICAL PARTIES: HISTORY, ORGANIZATION, COMPOSITION, POLITICS

HISTORY

The history of Swiss parties under the federal system falls into two sharply distinguished periods: first, that from 1848 to 1919, during the whole of which with the exception of a brief interlude in the late seventies, the Independent Democrats were in full control of the government at Bern; second, the period from 1919 to the present time, during which, as a result of proportional representation, no single party has been able to attain a majority in the National Council. Following the victory of the Protestant and centralizing elements in the brief civil war of the Sonderbund (1847), and the successful establishment one year later of a federal constitution under their auspices, it was but natural that they should take the helm of the newly established government. In the first National Council elected under the constitution of 1848 there were one hundred and eleven members, all of whom were Independent Democrats, or Radicals as they were then more commonly called, with the exception of seven or eight representatives of the Catholic Conservative element.

From the latter nucleus, small as it was, there developed the first opposition party in Swiss politics. Condemned to perpetual minority by the fact that their confession includes only 40 per cent of the population, the Catholic Conservatives nevertheless grew in strength with the years, having thirty-four seats out of a total of one hundred and eighty-nine in the National Council at the outbreak of the World War. The strength of the hold which its leaders possess over their following is the marvel and despair of politicians in other camps. One must not assume, however, that the only Conservatives in Swiss politics were also Catholics. In a number of western cantons there developed a second conservative movement strongly Protestant in composition, known as the Liberal Democratic or Liberal Conservative party. By 1905 its fraction in the National Council contained eighteen members. Thus, during the first period of Swiss politics there was a dominant and united party on the left, the Independent Democrats; and a divided opposition on the right, composed of the Catholic Conservatives and the Liberal Conservatives. Owing to their more pronounced reactionary tradition, the former were commonly referred to as the "right," never, as in German politics, as the "center." Hence, it was the Protestant Liberal Conservative party which came to be known in Switzerland as *das Zentrum.*

Prior to 1919, three smaller political parties were formed, all representing a trend to the left. The Social Political group dates from the late sixties of the nineteenth century, although not organized nationally until 1905. Its strength was centered largely among the working classes of various eastern cantons; and, as the name implies, it devoted itself principally to social legislation, not without a considerable measure of success. Up to the end of the World War the Social Political fraction in the National Council contained from seven to twelve members, but under proportional representation the party has lost steadily, retaining at present three seats only. Founded in 1836 the Grütli association was the earliest national party organization in the country. Made up largely of workingmen and lower middle-class elements who took for their motto, "*Durch Bildung zur Freiheit,*" its interests were at first centered on self-improvement through education, but in the course of time became increasingly radical. In 1901 it was united politically to the Social Democratic party by an agreement known as the "Solothurn wedding" *(Solothurner Hochzeit)*, under which, however, neither of the contracting parties was entirely happy, so that it was dissolved in 1916. Following the divorce, the Grütli association failed rapidly and was finally liquidated in 1925. Third, and ultimately the most successful of these movements to the left, was the Social Democratic party. It was called into existence, nominally at least, by a general Socialist congress held in 1870, but counted for nothing in national politics until reorganized in 1888. Two years later the party won its first parliamentary seat, growing steadily from that time onward in spite of the peculiarly heavy handicap which it had to meet under the majority system of election. At the outbreak of the World War its fraction in the National Council numbered seventeen, to which it succeeded in adding two more before the advent of proportional representation.

During the long period of Independent Democratic dominance the major political aims which had been struggled for during the Regeneration period (1830–48), and for the further development of which the federal constitution of 1848 formed a firm foundation, were successfully attained and consolidated. As against ancient privileges of every description which survived well into the nineteenth century, political, legal, and even a large measure of social, equality were established throughout the land, the latter, however, not including economic equality without which, from a socialistic point of view, the work was woefully incomplete. Meanwhile wider powers of democratic control than existed anywhere else in the world were conferred upon the people, a thoroughly efficient system of public schools was set up, the basis of an effective militia army laid, and a creditable beginning made in social legislation. At the same time population multiplied, commerce and industry grew apace, wealth increased, and the country enjoyed profound peace. No wonder that the Independent Democrats were proud of their handiwork. Little impressed by the persistent opposition of the Catholic minority (that matter had been settled in 1847 according to their way of thinking), they felt, indeed, that Switzerland was a little utopia of their own making; the Swiss a people set apart, free from the vices and evils current in other European nations with their great metropolitan cities filled with poverty stricken masses; a favored people, so blessed with freedom, equality, peace, prosperity, and happy rural surroundings that it should sing in unison perpetual hosannas of praise to God and of gratitude to the Independent Democratic party.

It is easy to say why, but difficult to say just when, this political vision of Paradise Regained began to fade. As to the former point, the wealth of the country was increasing rapidly during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, but it was not being distributed in accordance with that principle of equality by which the Swiss set such great store in their political life. A class of capitalists, engaged in international as well as in domestic business, and, because of the former, developing a cosmopolitan outlook quite unlike that characteristic of *ein Volk von Hirten*, attained a new prominence in the state compared with which even the distinction of membership in the Federal Council grew dim. Meanwhile the poorer citizens of Switzerland lost confidence in political democracy as a universal social solution. In spite of the many old and solid advantages they enjoyed and the newer benefits conferred by social legislation, they began to turn from political democracy to social democracy.

Various events and dates in the eighties and nineties of the preceding century are cited as marking the change that was taking place in Swiss politics. The series of tariff measures—1884, 1887, 1891, and 1902—the last two challenged by referendum but carried by large popular majorities—was unusually significant. As a result, free-trade Switzerland became high-protective Switzerland, beneficiaries being largely of the industrial and to a less degree of the agricultural class.

Perhaps even more significant was the tremendous sweep of the public-ownership movement, as a result of which communes purchased water works, gas works, and street railways; cantons developed electric power plants; and the federation itself took over the railroad system, beginning with 1898. The latter step, assuredly the largest economic experiment in Swiss history, was opposed by a majority of the Catholic Conservatives and Liberal Conservatives, partly on business grounds, partly because of the enormous increase in the power of the central government certain to result. Forgetting their earlier laissez faire theories, the Independent Democrats strongly supported the purchase of the railroads; and, of course, the Socialists, with certain reservations, took the same position because they saw in nationalization an opportunity "to win out of capitalism as conquered territory, a domain which up to the present time has remained subject to its sway." Of the two parties, it is safe to say that the Socialists are better pleased with subsequent developments, because they have succeeded in recruiting a large mass of supporters among federal railway employees. For the same reason many Independent Democrats rather regret nationalization, or at least wish that after purchase the government had leased the lines to private operating companies. In either case, however, or even assuming the continuance of private ownership and operation, it seems likely that railroad workers would have gone over to the Socialist party in large numbers, just as the great mass of employees in cantonal and municipal undertakings have done.

From an outside point of view—the Swiss take such things for granted—it is an amazing fact that the Independent Democrats ruled the country for so long a time without becoming corrupt. Seven decades of domination by a single party without a single crooked deal or scandal is doubtless a world's record. Opponents charged it with various sins but, apparently, never with the sin of venality. Toward the end of the period under discussion, however, various signs indicated that Independent Democratic strength was largely deceptive. It proved increasingly difficult to hold so large a mass together without severe internal stresses. Politically, the party had long since developed a right wing, a left wing, and a center; and as economic issues became prominent, it was forced constantly to attempt by every manner of shift and compromise to reconcile its motley following. Worst of all was the problem presented, on the one hand, by the peasants and, on the other, by the mass of city laborers, including both the workers in private industries and the *Beamtentum*, i.e., the rapidly increasing mass of civil servants and employees in government undertakings.

Any favor to the latter was resented as making the farmer's hard lot harder; yet, if such favors were not forthcoming, the march of labor toward the Socialist camp was accelerated. Any favor to the peasants was resented by the workers as likely to increase the cost of living, but in the absence of such favors the agricultural class threatened political reprisals. As time went on, these antagonisms became more open; economic distress during the World War further inflamed them, promoting a growth of radical sentiment, which was manifested in threatening outbreaks in 1917 and 1918.

All things considered, it seems likely that the Independent Democrats would soon have suffered serious secessions and the loss of their dominant position even if proportional representation had not been adopted for the election of the National Council. Twice they had used their influence successfully against it (November 4, 1900; October 23, 1910); but the tide was rising, not only in favor of the reform per se as shown by its adoption in many cantons and communes, but also in favor of the reform as a means of putting an end to the hegemony one party had so long maintained in federal affairs. When the measure came before the people a third time as an initiated amendment to the constitution, the Independent Democrats again struggled manfully against fate. All the minor parties, expecting to be in at the killing, supported it—a step which the smaller of them have had occasion to regret subsequently. The popular verdict in favor of proportional representation (and in a sense against the Independent Democratic party) of October 13, 1918, was decisive—299,550 voters and 19½ cantons for; 149,035 voters and 2½ cantons opposed.[1]

Since the adoption of the amendment, four general elections to the National Council have taken place, with results as shown in Table IV, the figures for 1917 being prefixed for purposes of comparison.

The heavy loser under proportional representation, as Table IV shows, was the Independent Democratic party, which suffered the loss of forty-five seats in the election of 1919. Its only consolation lay in the fact that it still retained the largest single fraction in the National Council. To a less extent the smaller minor parties—Liberal Conservatives, Social Political group, Grütlians, etc.—suffered, their total strength falling from twenty-seven to eighteen as a result of the first election under proportional representation. It has continued to fall subsequently, until at present one of them is dead, the others moribund, while all together they have less than half their legislative strength of 1917. Thus the prediction that proportional representation would result in unlimited *Zersplitterung* and the multiplication of petty parties has been falsified by events. The only new party which has profited is the Peasants' party, which, seeing the opportunity open to it under the changed system of voting, entered the national field in 1919 and gained an astounding success, which it has since consolidated. Second only to the Peasants' party, the Socialists had the most reason to rejoice over the first proportional representation election; moreover, they have gained consistently ever since, and at present are the second party in Switzerland. The Catholic Conservatives have held their own and a little more; although they are now third instead of second in strength in the National Council, their power has been greatly enhanced because their votes are necessary to the governmental bloc.

---

[1] On the two earlier proportional referendum initiatives the vote was as follows: November 4, 1900—for, 169,018 voters and 10½ cantons—against, 244,570 voters and 11½ cantons; October 23, 1910—for, 240,305 voters and 12 cantons—against, 265,194 voters and 10 cantons. It will be noted that in the second instance the proponents had a majority of the cantons but not of the popular vote—a very rare thing in Swiss experience. According to the constitution (Articles 118–23, inclusive) both are required to carry an amendment.

TABLE IV*

Distribution of Seats in the National Council by Parties
Elections from 1917 to 1928 Inclusive

	1917	1919	1922	1925	1928
Independent Democrats	103	58	58	59	58
Catholic Conservatives	40	41	44	42	46
Peasants' party	....	31	35	31	31
Social Democrats	19	41	43	49	50
Other parties	27	18	18	17	13
Total	189	189	198	198	198

* Table based upon figures presented by F. Giovanoli, *Statistik der Nationalratswahlen, 1919, 1922, 1925 und 1928*, p. 14.

In general the political lines drawn in 1919 have been but little altered by the three subsequent national elections. Under the new dispensation there are four major parties in Switzerland: first, the Independent Democrats; second, the Social Democrats; third, the Catholic Conservatives; and fourth, the Peasants' party. Between them they control at present 93.4 per cent of the seats in the National Council. Finally, one may deduce from the figures presented in Table IV above that proportional representation has come to stay in Switzerland. Naturally, the Independent Democrats do not like it because of the tremendous blow dealt them in 1919, but they are now a minority and hence unable to change it even if they would; also, the people rendered a decision on the subject in 1918 far too emphatic to be tampered with. Further, the parties which profited by the new system control a large majority of the National Council; consequently they are not likely to suffer it to be subverted, although if any one of them —say, for example, the Socialists—were to outstrip the others in voting strength, a change of heart might result. For while that party has been greatly aided temporarily by proportional representation, its final accession to power may be long delayed by the same means. Under these circumstances leaders of the formerly dominant Independent Democrats have resigned themselves more or less to their fate; indeed, many of them admit the substantial justice of the reform although at the same time they deplore the dispersal of authority and the disappearance of government under a single great party, harking back to the good old days when they ruled the country without effective rivalry. Deeper than all calculations of party advantage or disadvantage, however, is the conviction now shared by men of every political affiliation in Switzerland that proportional representation should be sustained because it is essentially fair and equal in its workings. Under the old system, elections nearly always enhanced the strength of the majority party and diminished that of its minority opponents unduly; under the new system, each shares in the rewards of office according to its following. Proportional representation compels democracy to be true to itself and by so doing has made the latter even more worthy of the confidence and loyalty of the Swiss people than ever before.

Majority politics with one party permanently in a stellar rôle have therefore disappeared indefinitely from the Swiss national stage. Instead, blocs face each other, shifting in composition as issues shift, the element of cohesion being supplied as a rule by the necessity of overcoming the growing Socialist fraction in the National Council. To secure that end, a combination of both Catholic Conservatives and Peasants' party members with the Independent Democrats is desirable; at a pinch the votes of the first and third alone would suffice—a fact which materially increases the desire of the formerly dominant party to conciliate their ancient enemies, the clericals. One step in the latter direction was taken in the summer of 1920, when the Federal Council announced that it had given permission for the re-establishment of a papal nunciature at Bern.[2] Catholics regarded the act as one of simple justice long deferred; Protestants feared that it forboded increasing political activity on the part of the church with the result that old religious antagonisms would be revived. There are not a few prophets in Switzerland who predict attempts to repeal the clauses of the constitution excluding the Jesuits (Art. 51), as the next step in the same direction.

---

[2] As a result of the *Kulturkampf* in Switzerland the nunciature was abolished in 1873. For a Protestant view of its re-establishment, see Eduard His, *Die Nuntiatur in der Schweiz;* for a Catholic view, Hans Abt, *Die Schweiz und die Nuntiatur,* both published by O. Füssli, Zürich, 1925, as Nos. 62 and 65 of the pamphlet series, "Schweizer Zeitfragen."

Formation of a more or less durable triple alliance against the Socialists is also facilitated by the fact that both the Catholic Conservative party and the Peasants' party stand much farther to the right than the Independent Democrats. Nevertheless, lines are broken on specific issues. Thus, while in general there has been the greatest bitterness between Peasants and Socialists ever since the former aided so effectively in suppressing the general strike of 1918, the two parties co-operated on the grain monopoly proposal of 1926, although, as Professor Dürr observes, that was the one exception which proves the rule of their fundamental antagonism. Another instance of ties which cut across party lines is afforded by the existence at Bern of the Agricultural Club (Landwirtschaftlicher Klub), made up of some one hundred members of the two federal chambers, including not only representatives of the Peasants' party but also those representatives of other parties who are particularly friendly to rural interests. The club is in no sense a caucus, since it makes no effort to bind members to vote for or against given measures; but it holds meetings whenever necessary to discuss issues which concern agriculture; and it is safe to say that as a result of these meetings legislative support for peasant policies is materially increased. In further illustration of party combinations, a recipe somewhat as follows is employed whenever it is desired to increase the power of the central government: first, cut to a minimum what is asked for, including only the absolutely essential, excluding the merely desirable; second, turn over as much as possible of the administration and financial returns of the measure to the cantons; third, take advantage of any pending antagonism between Catholics and Protestants so that states' rights adherents of the latter confession in Western Switzerland will separate from their political friends, but religious opponents, the clericals. It was by such tactics, for example, that the constitutional revision of 1874 succeeded whereas that of 1872 failed. Neglect to follow the foregoing recipe, especially the part regarding religious friction, may result in a combination between Catholics and Romance Protestants with the result that the government is defeated, as was the case in the referendum vote of 1882 on the bill providing for federal supervision of public schools.

As to the common or garden variety of log-rolling, which is doubtless practiced to some extent in all legislatures, the Swiss are scarcely adepts, chiefly because of the referendum. Honorable gentlemen of various parties who get together at Bern in pursuit of some common end may indeed pledge votes to each other, but notoriously they cannot pledge the votes of the electorate; hence, efforts along this line are apt to take the form of concocting something that will not only pass the legislature but will also, which is more important, pass the people—a process known to the Swiss as taking into account "*referendumspolitische Rücksichten.*" With the exceptions noted, the general lineup in the National Council since 1919 has been the field against the Socialists. Nevertheless, it would be quite premature to talk of a two-party system as a result. Under proportional representation Peasants and Catholics find the hunting good, each for themselves; and they can always unite with the Independent Democrats to overwhelm a radical measure, as they did in 1922 on the capital-tax-levy initiative.

As a further consequence of the decline of the Independent Democrats, the processes of federal legislation have been slowed down, compromise has become the order of the day, and economic interests have begun to occupy the center of the political stage more clearly than ever before—all these, of course, being concomitants of the bloc system which has flourished since 1919. Each of the two newer parties which have developed strength under proportional representation is accused of standing for the welfare of a class rather than of the whole people. In addition to parties, thoroughgoing organizations both of employers and employees, equipped with capable secretarial staffs, insist upon being heard at Bern whenever any federal matter affecting them is under consideration. Swiss of the older generation complain bitterly of this state of affairs, turning with fond recollection to the earlier period of federal party history when the great issues seemed primarily political—questions involving central power versus cantonal power, liberalism versus conservatism, independence versus orthodoxy in both confessions. Undoubtedly there has taken place in Switzerland, as in many other countries, that *Verwirtschaftlichung* of political motives and parties so deprecated by the elder statesmen. But it is beside the mark to despair of the present because compromises are commonplace; certainly no better illustrations of that art are to be found than in the constitutions of 1848 and 1874.[3] Moreover, economic historians have demonstrated that behind the issues alleged to be purely political of the first four decades following 1848 there was a lively, although largely concealed, play of material interests. Also, the argument may be made that it is better to have these forces organized and deployed in the open, as at present, rather than under cover, as in earlier periods, when persons of all sorts and conditions belonged to the same party and repeated the same high-sounding slogans, while the more selfish and forceful among them turned legislation and administration to the advancement of narrow class interest.

---

[3] Cf. Eduard Fueter, *Die Schweiz seit 1848,* pp. 37, 113.

Even those who most emphasize the increasing play of economic motives in Swiss politics must admit that other factors have not lost their appeal. Thus they cannot account for the secession of various elements from the Independent Democratic party on the former ground without admitting that the large numbers of those who continue to vote its ticket do so because of primarily political reasons—if, indeed, one is ever able to distinguish between them and economic reasons. Also, it is obvious that the principal bond of unity in that one of the older parties, the Catholic Conservative, which came through proportional representation with virtually no dislocations, belongs to neither category, being at bottom religious. Perhaps because the Swiss take such things for granted, many of them seem not to realize how greatly their devotion to home rule and democracy, the strongest of their loyalties, is in conflict with economic interest. If cantonal constitutions and boundaries were abolished; if one of their three languages, or perhaps Esperanto, were made the sole speech of the country; if local customs and traditions were wiped out; if—to heap the unthinkable upon the impossible—they were to scrap democracy and instal a capable dictator, *à la* Mussolini; then, no doubt, they would be much more efficient and prosperous, at least for a time. Also, of course, they would cease to be Swiss. When national traits of so cherished a character are involved, it is obvious that the *Verwirtschaftlichung* of parties, so generally deplored, is, after all, not the fundamental term of their politics.

ORGANIZATION OF SWISS PARTIES

Although in the foregoing Swiss parties have been referred to as existing on a national scale, the assumption is subject to large deduction. Decentralization in the constitutional structure of the country is reflected by a considerable measure of decentralization in its party structure. Indeed, during the greater part of the period from 1848 to the present time there were, strictly speaking, no national party organizations whatever. The nearest approach to anything of the sort consisted in the fractions formed after their election by representatives in the federal chambers; indeed, these fractions still remain the best basis for classification and statistical purposes.[4]

At the beginning of the period under discussion (1848), there were cantonal party organizations only, which took such names as pleased their fancy, whether or not these happened to throw any light on the composition or purposes of the group concerned. Each cantonal organization formulated principles and policies, nominated candidates, raised the small funds needed, carried on campaigns, and in general went its own way, troubling itself comparatively little, except in times of crisis, with similar groups in other parts of the country.

After this loose-jointed fashion the Independent Democrats had ruled Switzerland nearly half a century before the leaders of the party formed a national organization under that title in 1894. To the present day, however, the fraction of the party in the National Council continues to be known by its original name, viz., the Radikal-Demokratische Fraktion. The oldest opponents of the formerly dominant party, the Catholic Conservatives, made three attempts (1874, 1880, 1886) to achieve a national organization, all of which failed primarily because of the strength of separatist sentiment. Not until 1912 did they succeed in establishing themselves permanently as the Swiss Conservative People's party. It will be observed that the title chosen does not include the word "Catholic"; nevertheless, their fraction in the federal chambers continued after 1912 as before to be known officially as the "Katholisch-Konservative Fraktion." In everyday speech the first two words of the latter formula are used almost exclusively in referring to the party. Attempts were made to set up a national socialist organization in 1870, 1880, and 1888, but it was not until the fusion with the Grütlianer made at Solothurn in 1901 that the party developed any real strength. Even today, after participating with marked success in four National Council elections (1919, 1922, 1925, 1928), the Peasants' party has no national organization. Technically speaking, it is a congeries of cantonal parties in Bern, Zürich, Aargau, Thurgau, Schaffhausen, Basel-Stadt and Basel-Land, Vaud, and Ticino. It possesses a strong fraction in the federal chambers which bears the title of Bauern-, Gewerbe-, und Bürger-Fraktion. Moreover, the various cantonal parties belonging to the movement are firmly rooted in the Peasants' Union (Bauernverband), through which their general activities are successfully co-ordinated. It would lead too far afield to discuss the organization of minor Swiss parties; suffice it to say, that in general they are decentralized to a greater extent than the four major groups referred to above.

---

[4] Cf. F. Giovanoli, *Statistik der Nationalratswahlen, 1919, 1922, 1925 und 1928*, p. 25*.

Even after the greater parties of Switzerland had succeeded in establishing organizations as wide as the country itself, cantonal groups continued to function with only slightly reduced importance. They count for much more in Swiss political processes than our own state parties and state central committees in American politics. One piece of evidence bearing upon this condition is supplied by the fact that cantonal parties, with the exception of those belonging to the Socialist movement, have retained their original names. As many of the latter are without rhyme or reason, the result, taken as a whole, is a conglomeration which even Swiss practical politicians find puzzling. Statisticians can attack it only with the aid of tabular statements. Thus, in his admirable presentation of National Council election returns from 1919 to 1928, inclusive, Giovanoli finds it necessary to devote several pages to this intricate subject, concluding with a list of the twenty-five and twenty-two cantonal groups which contribute to the membership of Radical Democratic and Catholic Conservative fractions in the National Council, respectively.

Exasperating, on the whole, as are these petty differences of political nomenclature, they are illumined by certain curious conjunctures. Thus there is a Liberal party in the canton of Luzern and another of exactly the same name in the canton of Basel-Stadt, but the former belongs to the Independent Democratic national party and the latter to the Liberal Conservative party of Switzerland. In the canton of Geneva there is an Independent party, in the canton of Zürich a Christian Social party, and in Solothurn a Solothurnian People's party. All three belong to the Swiss Conservative People's party (i.e., the Catholic Conservative party). But the most curious single instance is supplied by the Canton of Zürich in which there are two separate parties, often fiercely opposed to each other locally—the Freisinnige Partei and the Demokratische Partei—both of which, however, are members in good standing of the national Independent Democratic party of Switzerland.[5] To promote clarity and save headaches, one can only long for the day when other Swiss parties, following the example of the

---

[5] The Freisinnige Partei of Zürich derives from the old Liberal party. Under the leadership of the great financial and political magnate, Alfred Escher, it was dominant in cantonal affairs during the forties and fifties of the preceding century. The Demokratische Partei, dating from the sixties and seventies, succeeded it in power. In spite of local antagonisms between the two, members of the National Council elected by each of them belong to the same fraction (Radical Democratic) of the National Council.

Socialists, will devise a uniform nomenclature including their legislative fractions, national organizations, and cantonal organizations all under the same rubrics.

Lest too much importance be attached to petty differences of title, it should be emphasized that the national organizations and activities of major Swiss parties are no longer cut across by language or cantonal boundaries. For example, the stronghold of the Catholic Conservatives is in the central German-speaking cantons, but it has a large following also in French-speaking Freiburg and Valais. Until recently, all cantons in which Peasant party organizations existed were German-speaking and Protestant, but in the National Council election of 1925, Italian-speaking Ticino and French-speaking Vaud were added to their list. Both the Independent Democratic and Social Democratic parties are well distributed over the country as a whole.

In structure and governing bodies Swiss parties are much alike. All of them provide for delegate assemblies or party diets to be held at least once annually, which are supreme in authority. The diet elects a *Zentralvorstand*, composed, in the case of the Independent Democrats, of thirty-two or more members and acting as a sort of consultative body between meetings of delegates. There is also a smaller executive committee *(geschäftsleitende Ausschuss)* to attend to current matters of business, composed, in the case of the party named, of the president of the *Zentralvorstand*, a secretary, a treasurer, and at least four associate members. In addition, there may be other committees, among which one notes with particular interest certain permanent committees on various economic issues, composed of appointive members active in party work *(Vertrauensmänner)*, who represent the principal occupations of the country, viz., agriculture, commerce, industry and handicrafts, the civil service, the salaried and laboring classes. Finally, there is the indispensable accompaniment of every large Swiss organization, whether political or otherwise—a permanent professional secretary with offices and a corps of clerical assistants. In the case of the Independent Democrats, the party secretary is ex officio a member of the executive committee, the *Zentralvorstand*, and the diet.

As the fundamental organ in this structure, the national party diet deserves a somewhat more detailed description. According to the *Statuten der Freisinnig-demokratischen Partei*,[6] it is composed of delegates elected by the cantonal parties each of which is entitled to seven delegates for each member which it has succeeded in electing to the

---

[6] Passed by the regular delegate assembly of the party at Luzern, May 28, 1921, Art. 5.

National Council. Cantonal parties having no representative in the latter body may send delegates not to exceed seven, and certain local bodies directly affiliated with the national organization also have a right to one delegate each. In addition, the following belong to the diet ex officio: members of the *Zentralvorstand*, of the executive committee of the party, of the steering committee of the party fraction in the chambers, and a delegation from the Swiss Independent Democratic Press Association. Other parties, among them the Catholic Conservatives and Socialists, provide in the same way for the presence and full membership of journalists in their diets.

Although a delegate assembly, the Swiss party diet differs sharply from American political conventions in that it does not make nominations. There are no elective offices in Switzerland within the gift of the people as a whole; hence this important function falls to local organizations, a fact which materially enhances the relative importance of the latter. On the other hand, the dignity and prestige of national party diets are increased by the fact that they do not have to contend with personal ambitions, being thus left free to attend to important questions of policy pending before the chambers or before the people in the form of initiative and referendum measures. As a result, debates in party diets which are participated in by federal officials, legislators, professors, experts, and political leaders from all parts of the country have an unusual significance as foreshadowing future developments in law-making or administration, and as such are reported at considerable length in the press. Taken down stenographically and published as party documents, they also find many readers among active party workers and the politically minded generally.

Since national party organization in Switzerland was derived from that of the earlier cantonal parties, it is not strange that in structure the latter should resemble closely the larger units with which they are now affiliated. There is always a cantonal party diet in supreme authority, a *Vorstand*, a secretariat, an executive committee, and such other committees as may be necessary, among them nearly always one on the press. In larger cantons the same set of party organs is repeated in its various administrative subdivisions. Thus, in Bern a socialist voter is called upon to elect delegates not only to the national and cantonal diets of his party but also to an annual district diet *(Verbandstag)*, the decisions of which are carried out locally by an *Amtsvorstand.*[7] Below the district party organization are locals *(Mitglied-*

---

[7] *Statut der Sozialdemokratischen Partei des Kantons Bern,* adopted by the regular cantonal party diet in Bern, February 18 and 19, 1922.

schaften) in each commune or in each ward of larger cities. They are composed of actual party members who hold an official meeting once a year for the transaction of more important business, and monthly for discussion, lectures, and consideration of the educational work of the party. At the annual meeting of each local a *Vorstand* is elected composed of at least five members (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and one or more associates).

All Swiss parties lay great stress on the training, character and selection of the *Vertrauensmänner* who make up the membership of local committees. The latter correspond, of course, to American precinct committees, the "unit cells" of our political structure. Swiss local party workers, it is safe to say, are much inferior to their colleagues of the United States in the arts of practical politics, knowing nothing, even in city wards, about bribery, intimidation, personation, assistance to voters, repeating, stuffing ballot boxes, or falsifying the count. On the other hand, a Swiss *Vertrauensmann* is expected to be familiar with party principles, policies, tactics; moreover, he must be able to present them to citizens of his neighborhood in such a way as to bring out the largest possible vote on election day. Incredible as it may seem, the president of the Swiss socialist organization recently prepared for party workers of this class a decidedly heavy treatise setting forth at considerable length the psychological principles on which they should base their activities.[8]

COMPOSITION OF SWISS PARTIES

During the first four or five decades following the adoption of the federal constitution of 1848 each of the major parties of Switzerland was made up of members of all social classes and of every occupational group. Issues were chiefly political and to a less extent religious in character, not that economic antagonisms were absent but rather that they did not appear in the forefront of electoral campaigns. The last three decades have witnessed a remarkable shifting of the center of interest, so much so, indeed, that no subject is more discussed or deplored by the Swiss than the increasing part played by economic factors in determining party motives.[9] Meanwhile there has been a sorting out of the makeup of the major organizations, which, while obviously not complete, does permit one to speak with some confidence regarding the distribution of social classes and occupational groups among existing parties.

---

[8] Ernst Reinhard, *Psychologische Winke fur Vertrauensleute* (Bern: Vlg. S.A.B.Z., 1925), a pamphlet of some twenty thousand words.

[9] The most significant contribution on this subject is Emil Dürr, *Neuzeitliche Wandlungen in der schweizerischen Politik, eine historisch-politische Betrachtung über die Verwirtschaftlichung der politischen Motive und Parteien* (Basel: Helbing u. Lichtenhahn, 1928).

Two of these, the Socialist and Peasants' parties, are generally accused of championing class interests rather than the collective interest of the state or of the people as a whole which the older parties always professed to represent. So far as the former is concerned, it is, of course, avowedly a workers' organization, although by no means all workers belong to it. Also there are many more subdivisions of the laboring class than Marxists are accustomed to admit. The Swiss Socialist party is recruited chiefly from the mass of industrial city workers, from laborers and clerical employees of the communal, cantonal, and federal governments and in public enterprises owned and operated by them, including, of course, the army of federal railway employees. Back of the party, so closely affiliated that they seem indistinguishable from it, are numerous powerful trade-unions and unions of civil servants.

In a sense, all members of the occupational groups referred to above may be considered to belong to the laboring class, but it is obvious that a very large proportion of them are "white-collar" workers, whose interests are bound up to so considerable a degree with the existing state structure that, while they may toy with the idea of a Bolshevist revolution, nothing in reality would be more abhorrent to them. Recipients of fixed salaries such Socialists are often denounced by their more radical party comrades as possessing a petty bourgeois outlook. Even in so economical a country as Switzerland, however, dues are a necessity of life both to trade-union and to party organizations. Now civil servants and employees in public works may be sufficiently underpaid to vote "red," but they are fairly sure of permanent employment, and hence may be counted on to contribute regularly to party and trade-union funds; whereas laborers in the service of private concerns are likely to be thrown out of work and hence may be unable to contribute during periods of depression. The foregoing consideration is said to enhance materially the conservative influence exercised by government employees in the councils of the Socialist party—another case, no doubt, of economic determinism.[10]

It is not to be assumed, however, that privately employed manual workers in Switzerland are violent revolutionaries. On the contrary, a large proportion are skilled laborers—"quality workers" in the phrase of the country—well aware of the high standard of wages, relative to the continental European scale, which they enjoy, and also familiar with the difficulties which the industries employing them have to overcome in international competition. According to figures recently published by the federal statistical office, real wages of skilled workers in Switzerland increased from 25 to 27 per cent, and of unskilled workers, 25 per cent, between 1913 and 1928. Not that such figures put an end to controversy: orthodox economists interpret them as disproving the Marxian theory of increasing misery; radicals as demonstrating the efficacy of socialist and trade-union tactics.

---

[10] Citizens who belong to other parties sometimes charge that Swiss Socialist leaders are given confidential information in advance of the plans of the government by members of the party who hold civil service jobs. It is probable, of course, that this leakage exists, also that Socialist leaders are not the only ones who profit by it, since members of other parties hold many governmental positions.

Digressing for a moment from the major political parties, a word may be said regarding the Communists, who split from the Socialist party in 1920, but have since been going steadily downhill.[11] Their support, confined chiefly to four industrial cantons of the east, is contributed largely by the mass of unskilled workers, particularly those employed in the heavier metal industries. If there is any truly proletarian element in Switzerland, which orthodox economists deny, it is for the time being at least Communist. In spite of fiery manifestoes issuing from their camp declaring for direct action and denouncing the Socialist party as hopelessly reactionary, one may nevertheless doubt whether the trace of Communism revealed by recent national elections represents a violent revolutionary ferment. In any event, Moscow is reported to have demanded in 1929 a complete shake-up of the leadership of the party on the ground that the latter flirted too much with the Socialists and did not engage in insurrectionary tactics *(putschistische Taktik)*.[12] By way of unconscious humor, perhaps, a few days after the announcement of the foregoing the Swiss press reported the election of one of the most prominent Communist politicians of Basel to membership on the board of the cantonal bank!

The Swiss Peasants' party is also accused of representing a separate class interest. As a matter of fact, it is composed almost wholly of persons engaged in agriculture, although, with a magnificently inclusive gesture of invitation, it gives itself the title of Peasants', Artisans', and Citizens' party.[13] Recently, however, it has begun to attract a contingent of independent mechanics catering to rural customers in eastern Swiss cantons. Not all peasants, by any means, belong to the Peasants' party, for the Catholic Conservative party has championed the interests of the large number of those of their own confession who are engaged in agriculture so effectively that it has retained their support; moreover, the Independent Democratic party of Western Switzerland, which is less highly industrialized than Eastern Switzerland, has also succeeded in avoiding the defection of its farming element in large part.

---

[11] The Communist vote in the National Council election of 1928 was less than 1.5 per cent of the total cast in the country as a whole. Nearly two-thirds of the party's support comes from Zürich; nevertheless, it was so small a fraction of the whole that in 1928 the Communists lost the one seat previously held from that canton. In the present National Council, elected that year, they have but two representatives, one from Basel-Stadt, the other from Schaffhausen.

[12] *Der Bund,* June 24, 1929.

Just as there are laborers and laborers, so also there are peasants and peasants. In Switzerland it is customary to distinguish between *Grossbauern*, *Mittelbauern*, and *Kleinbauern*.[14] The first-named, who make up 3 per cent of the total, hold land in excess of 30 hectares (about 75 acres) and, being quite well-to-do according to rural standards, are frequently found on boards of directors of local commercial and industrial undertakings. Middle peasants have farms of from 5 to 30 hectares, and make up 37 per cent of the agricultural class, the remaining 60 per cent who cultivate lesser holdings being classified as small peasants. Naturally the large-scale peasants are more conservative than their brothers with farms of 5 hectares or under. At the bottom of the smaller peasant class there is even a fringe which inclines to support Socialist policies occasionally. It is made up of owners of very small holdings who find part-time employment for themselves or children in neighboring factories, or who fill minor positions at rural railway stations cultivating their fields between train times.

As a matter of dialectics, it is, of course, not difficult to show that the interests of a class coincide with the interests of society as a whole. If the class in question be as large and as vital to the life of the country, especially in time of war, as is the Swiss peasantry, the argument may lay claim to a large measure of validity. Something of the sort was attempted by Professor Ernst Laur, secretary of the Swiss Peasants' Union, in a remarkable recent pamphlet entitled *Swiss Peasants' Policies in the Light of a Higher Conception of Life.*[15] There is in it much of the simple faith that "God made the country, man made the town"; indeed, it starts with the assumption that "the preservation and strengthening of agriculture and of the farming class is the first condition for the welfare of a people." The pamphlet indignantly repudiates the accusation that the political activities of Swiss peasants are aimed merely at their own material prosperity. Any party worthy of the name must seek not only economic gain but the spiritual and moral welfare of the people as a whole. Man's earthly life is short, his life hereafter eternal; and peasants, because of their close touch with the works of God revealed in nature, are more deeply impressed with this truth than urban industrial workers. Rooted in the soil, working with living plants and animals, the farmer does not regard his labor, in spite of its exacting character and the long hours involved, as a burden and a curse; he has no time for strikes, boycotts, sabotage, union labels, minimum wages, and other such modern contraptions. For these reasons the political aims of peasants are fundamentally religious; never can they accept the materialistic views or the anti-religious attitude of Socialists. Since earthly life is only the antechamber of heaven, the most important of its concerns is not economic but rather development of moral and spiritual character through the school and education, through self-discipline in one's occupation and all the other relations of life, through law and justice, through worthy conditions in family, commune, and state. Not that material circumstances are negligible; in the case of exceptional characters greatness of soul may indeed result from need and renunciation, but, so far as the common mass of mankind is concerned, "poverty fills more penitentiaries than monasteries." While necessary, therefore, economic prosperity is secondary to spiritual well-being. Thus the peasant movement has at bottom a religious conception of life, a conception broad enough to afford a basis for all confessions; it maintains "the right of unconditional allegiance to one's own church, the duty of toleration, respect and love toward those who believe otherwise, but antagonism against all who place the body and this material existence above the soul."

---

[13] Of course, as stated above, it is not organized nationally; but the strongest cantonal party belonging to this group, from which in fact the country-wide movement sprang, is the Bernese Peasants', Artisans', and Citizens' party. Its fraction in the National Council bears a similar title. In common speech, however, it is referred to as the Peasants' party, simply.

[14] Statistical reports distinguish five classes, dividing the middle peasants into lesser, average, and greater middle peasants. See *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1927*, p. 154. The percentages stated above are based on the "Census of Enterprises" of 1905, the first and to date only complete investigation of the sort the results of which have been published. In the opinion of the secretariat of Swiss Peasants, however, conditions regarding the extent of individual land holdings have not changed greatly since it was taken.

Into Dr. Laur's detailed statements on the army and international relations it is not the place to go here, nor need anything be added regarding his formulation of the economic objectives of his party. Suffice it to say, that, regardless of the emphasis laid upon spiritual factors, anyone who doubts the ability of the secretariat of the *Bauernverband* to discuss effectively and exhaustively such topics as production, prices, tariffs, wages, rent, monopolies, commercial treaties, and social insurance is due for a rude shock. Obviously the pamphlet was designed partly as an attack upon the peasants' *bête noir*, Socialism, which it leaves in the unenviable position of being the sole class party movement in Switzerland—godless, materialistic, short-sighted, and violent into the bargain. Equally obvious is the intent of the author to bring together on a broadly tolerant basis, if possible, all Christian peasants, whether they happen to be Protestants, as the overwhelming majority of his followers are, or Catholics who have not yet seen the light. As to the shrewdness of his argument there can be no doubt in spite of the neglect of the fact that natural laws (or God's will if you prefer that term) are at work in the factory as well as in the field.

---

[15] *Die schweizerische Bauernpolitik im Lichte einer höheren Lebensauffassung* (4th ed.; Brugg: Vlg. d. schw. Bauernverbandes, 1925).

Originally, as we have noted, the Independent Democratic party was composed of members from every social class and occupational group. In spite of defections of masses of peasants to the right and of workingmen to the left prior to and since 1919, it still represents a wide range of interests. Farmers and artisans continue to vote with it in large numbers, especially in Western Switzerland and in those cantons where antagonism to Catholicism outweighs economic motives. Liberals by conviction, representatives of commerce, industry, and business in general make up the solid and immensely potent nucleus of its following. The Independent Democratic left wing is a medley of groups attracted by what the party has accomplished in the fields of social insurance and state socialism, and by its interest in the improvement of the living conditions of civil servants and of the consuming public generally. In spite of the loss of its dominant position in 1919, many electors vote the Independent Democratic ticket on the basis of the party's past record and because it is much more likely to "get things done" than other parties—motives which, by the way, work to the advantage of the Conservatives in England and of the Republicans in the United States, both of whom the Independent Democrats closely resemble.

Catholic Conservatives continue as they began, a party of every social class and economic condition. They poll an overwhelming majority of the vote in certain of the inner cantons, where other tickets presumably have the support only of a handful of "foreigners" coming from the Protestant sections of Switzerland.[16] While the centers of ultramontane strength are not highly urbanized or industrialized, there is, nevertheless, a wide range of variety among Catholic Conservatives. Professor Dürr divides them into three main groups: (1) clericals of the right; (2) conservatives of the center with whom large numbers of peasants and small business men are affiliated; and (3) members of the laboring class on the left organized in Christian Social unions. In spite of the rise of the Peasants' party the Catholic Conservatives have held their agricultural support solidly. On the other hand, they have been worried at times by defections, mostly temporary but sometimes permanent, from Christian Social into radical trade-unions and thence into the Socialist party itself.

---

[16] Thus the Catholic Conservative vote in the National Council election of 1928 was, in Obwalden, 96.4 per cent, and in Nidwalden, 97.3 per cent, of the total.

A word may be added here regarding the composition of two older parties now greatly reduced in power, the Liberal Democrats and the Social Political fraction. As late as 1905 the former had eighteen members in the National Council; now there are six only. The Liberal Democrats, or Liberal Conservatives as they were sometimes called, always counted for more than their numerical strength warranted, owing to the wealth, intelligence, and social standing of their following. Of recent years, however, the party has lost support to the right wing of the Independent Democrats and to the Peasants' party. The present remnant of their following, which is made up chiefly of Protestant manufacturing elements with old family connections, is still strong in the cantonal affairs of Neuchâtel, Vaud, and Geneva. At the extreme left wing of the bourgeois camp—the Grütlians affiliated with it once—the Social Political fraction formerly enjoyed considerable support in Eastern Switzerland. At present it has but three members in the National Council, elected in 1928 from Glarus, Graubünden, and Neuchâtel.

POLICIES OF SWISS PARTIES

In a sense, it is the misfortune of the Independent Democrats that they have been so successful. By and large the party may be said to have written its principles into the constitution of Switzerland, enacted its policies into law, and provided adequately for their administration. Fundamentally, the program of the Independent Democrats rested upon freedom—freedom of thought, of belief and conscience, of the press, of education. By striking off the shackles inherited from an aristocratic past, the party early created in Switzerland an atmosphere of liberty unknown elsewhere in continental Europe and equaled only, if at all, by England and the United States. Negatively, the party was, and is, anti-clerical and anti-reactionary; but it no longer possesses a monopoly of these tendencies, for the Socialists also lay claim to them after their own fashion. Positively, it stands not only for the maintenance of the *status quo* in fundamental matters but also for progress. Progress, however, as Professor Dürr remarks, has become a variable concept, capable of a Christian, a liberal, a socialistic, and of various other interpretations. Hence, the Independent Democrats of the present give the impression of being largely on the defensive; certainly they lack the clear-cut, fighting program of their earlier decades.

Similarly, the Catholic Conservatives are satisfied on the whole with what they have attained. After the downfall of the Sonderbund they desired, above all things, to preserve their church, their schools, their hospitals, and other charitable institutions—in a word, their separate *Kultur*. Sheltered behind the boundary lines of the half-dozen cantons they control, they have been successful in these objectives to a degree that would have seemed utterly impossible in 1848. The principle of equal representation in the Council of States, borrowed from the Senate of the United States, enabled them, with the aid of western Swiss advocates of states' rights, to defeat many hostile legislative attacks. They might almost thank their Independent Democratic opponents for pushing through the federal initiative and referendum, since these tools of direct popular rule have often served them as an additional shield against assaults from the anti-clericals. Finally, proportional representation, as we have already noted, placed the party in a stronger relative position than ever before.

Much of the ancient bitterness between the two older parties of Switzerland deriving from the Sonderbund war in 1847 and the *Kulturkampf* of the early seventies was wiped out by a policy of reconciliation which culminated in 1891 with the election of Joseph Zemp to the Federal Council, the first Catholic Conservative to belong to that body. At present two of the seven members of the Federal Council, Giuseppe Motta and Jean-Marie Musy, are Catholic Conservatives, the former since 1911, the latter since 1919. Both have held the office of federal president, Motta in 1915 and again in 1920, Musy in 1925. On none of these occasions was there any protest that the country would "go to the dogs" because its chief titular executive was a Catholic. No contemporary Swiss statesman enjoys higher repute at home or abroad than Giuseppe Motta, who, among his other honors, was president of the Fifth Assembly of the League of Nations.

Softened as are the contemporary attitudes and relations of Independent Democrats and Catholic Conservatives, there is no doubt whatever of the fighting spirit prevailing between Peasants and Socialists. Fundamentally, the antagonism between the two latter is a renewal under modern forms of the age-old conflict between city and country, a conflict repeated so often in the pages of Swiss history that it suggests the cynical French observation, "*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*" More than other Swiss political leaders those at the head of the agrarian movement are inclined to speak with a certain contempt of the Socialist party as merely playing with ultraradical ideas, its real aims being higher wages, shorter hours, more holidays, and more social insurance for urban workers. If, nevertheless, the Socialists should attempt revolution, the peasants are prepared, as soldiers in the federal army, again to oppose them with arms in hand, repeating the lesson administered in 1918. And the more radical Socialists are given to retort that, having saved the bourgeois state on that occasion, the peasants promptly formed a party and have used it to collect for their services ever since.

Professor Dürr sums up the more fundamental antagonisms between the two as follows:

> collectivist sentiment among the Socialist workers, economic individualism among the peasants; enmity toward capital and property on the side of Socialism, strong individual acquisitiveness and pride in property among the peasantry; economic combination here, economic freedom there . . . . , a doctrinaire attitude regarding economic matters among Socialists, a natural-organic conception of economic processes among the peasants.[17]

All the foregoing are reduced to the antitheses of social revolution versus social conservatism, of internationalism versus national sentiment. On pending issues the peasants incline to protectionism, the Socialists to free trade, particularly in all goods consumed by the masses of the people; the peasants favor indirect federal taxes, the Socialists oppose them; the Socialists favor national, even international, regulation of the length of the working day and of labor conditions in general; the peasantry believes in leaving such matters as far as possible free from governmental interference, adapting economic activities to the conditions of the times; Socialists support far-reaching schemes of social insurance without contributions by beneficiaries, whereas peasants qualify their support of such measures with the condition that contributions be required; Socialists demand social legislation specifically for the benefit of the laboring class, the peasants for the benefit of all classes.

It would seem that conflicts of purpose so numerous as the foregoing would be sufficient to preclude any possibility of reconciliation.

---

[17] *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

Yet, just as the dream of a Farmer Labor party is perennial in the United States, so also in Switzerland theoretical politicians devise schemes for uniting peasants and city workers in a single party, or at least in a parliamentary bloc, which in time might control the country. In outline one such scheme, of Socialist origin, contemplates the organization of government buying monopolies to bring in coal, grain, and other needed basic commodities, controlling domestic prices thereon so that producers and consumers inside the country would not suffer; at the same time organizing the peasants for the unified marketing of their goods, thereby wiping out middlemen and their alleged outrageous profits. By these processes it should prove possible to enable city consumers to buy at lower prices and agricultural producers to sell for more than at present. Obviously, however, the plan does not take into account the peasant's obstinate individualism; his tight-fisted property instinct which recoils from the idea of land nationalization. Perhaps for these reasons a period of from ten to twenty years, presumably to be employed in educational work, was estimated as necessary for the projected combination of the two parties.

There can be little doubt, as peasant leaders sarcastically observe, that class struggle and revolution, both proclaimed publicly by Swiss Socialist propagandists as cardinal points of the party dogma, are, after all, deceptive if any violent upheaval is thereby intimated. In confidence most Socialists of any prominence are willing to admit the charge, but only in confidence. Any possible doubt on the subject was pretty well removed by the outcome, unfortunate from the radical point of view, of the general strike in 1918, since which time labor conditions have greatly improved. The inability of the Socialist party to bring about any sweeping change, even by peaceful means, was further demonstrated by the defeat of the capital-tax-levy initiative in 1922. Under this proposal only six out of every thousand citizens would have been assessed—certainly a strong temptation to offer any electorate—yet the popular vote against it was 736,952 to 109,702, the latter figure falling sixty thousand behind the Socialist party vote in the National Council election of the same year.

If there is any constitution in the world which deprives violent revolution of moral justification, certainly it is the Swiss constitution with its democratic basis, proportional representation, and the facilities for peaceful amendment offered by the initiative and referendum. True, force was successfully appealed to, and not infrequently at that, in earlier epochs of Swiss history, but that was before institutions of popular control had been introduced. The "era of insurrections"

(Ära der Putsche), as a recent writer remarks, antedates 1848.[18] Moreover, the composition of the Socialist party, especially the large number of minor civil servants and public employees among its membership, indicates clearly enough, as noted above, that violent upheaval is out of the question.

It is a matter of common knowledge, also, that comparatively few responsible leaders of the Swiss Socialist party meditate other than peaceful means of promoting their cause. Many of them have served a long apprenticeship in communal and cantonal administrative posts, deriving from it a knowledge of the limitations of official power. A cartoon widely popular in Switzerland some few years ago brought out the alleged temperature of various prominent "reds" by presenting their names according to the gradations on the face of a thermometer from freezing to boiling point, all but one being below the latter.[19] Why, then, do the more moderate among them, who certainly are anything but bloodthirsty at heart, accept leadership in a general strike which they know must fail? One possible answer is that they do so to prevent irresponsible fire-eaters from taking command. Why do they not, following the example of the British Labor party, scrap the class struggle and revolution slogans that cause cold chills to chase up and down the spines of so many timid bourgeois? A possible answer here is that they are retained precisely for the latter reason, as a sort of terrifying false face to keep the capitalists on the run and to wring concessions from them more easily; also, perhaps to convince their followers, *die Arbeitnehmer*, that they intend to put the screws down properly on their opponents, *die Arbeitgeber*, as soon as they get the chance. Now, in spite of the extreme caution of Swiss citizens of the middle class, the comedy is becoming a little threadbare; "*Épater le bourgeois*" is a possible motto, no doubt, but followed to excess it ceases to terrify, producing instead "*un bourgeois inépatable*." Conservative Swiss business men are beginning to note that with increasing power and responsibility Socialist leaders tone down somewhat; from which they deduce, not unreasonably, that in the improbable event that the Communists, who are so much noisier at present, should ever develop any strength, the same sort of transformation may be repeated in their case. What is more to the point is that Swiss employers have begun to study profit-sharing and industrial democracy. If economic conditions permit the latter idea to develop fully, it will be most interesting to watch its effects upon a people so deeply commit-

[18] Eduard Fueter, *Die Schweiz seit 1848,* p. 64.

[19] It is reproduced in *Der Staatsbürger,* 2. Jhrg., Nr. 1 (May 16, 1918), S. 7.

ted as are the Swiss to the principle of popular self-government in the political sphere.

Even now, one is constantly struck with the essentially humane view taken by leaders of all social classes with regard to the labor problem. Concerning unemployment, for example, the remark is commonly made that the country simply cannot permit it to exist. A great many Swiss laborers were out of work in the period following the World War, but by strenuous efforts on the part of all concerned the last few years have witnessed the virtual disappearance of unemployment. It would lead too far afield to discuss the methods employed or to decide what groups—statesmen and social workers, for example, or more particularly the employing class on the one hand or on the other the employees with their trade-union and party organization—deserve most credit for the achievement. What is essential, and essentially different from the apparent lack of interest prevailing in the United States despite its great army of jobless workers, is the full acceptance by Swiss men of light and leading of the conviction that unemployment cannot be tolerated; that, whenever it occurs, state and society must combine to wipe it out in the shortest possible time. There can be no doubt that humane sentiment and co-operative effort of this character contribute much to the belief cherished even by Swiss citizens in humbler circumstances that, after all, there is something in their national motto: "One for all, all for one."

While proportional representation made a sweeping change in the political complexion of the National Council, it has had no effect so far upon the composition of the Federal Council. In accordance with the custom of the constitution to the effect that the executive body of seven should reflect the strength of the principal parties in the legislature, due care being taken not to hustle out any surviving member of a declining party who wished to continue in office, the Federal Council was made up in 1919 of five Independent Democrats and two Catholic Conservatives. So it remains, although the Socialists are now strong enough in the chambers to lay claim to two seats in the supreme executive board of the republic. That they did not do so in 1925 was attributed to the opposition of certain party leaders who were unwilling to collaborate with "infamous capitalists" in the conduct of the federal administration. Considering that Socialists sit in the executive Councils of State of some seven or eight cantons, the attitude taken by party leaders in 1925 seems rather illogical, except from the point of view that, in accepting responsibility, they would have to abandon their somewhat savagely critical attitude.[20] In general, the two older parties are content with things as they are, fearing that Socialists would be a disturbing element in the Federal Council, which under present conditions has trouble enough at times in reaching executive decisions. Nevertheless, certain influential Independent Democrats are quite willing to have their disproportionate quota of five cut down, on the ground that, so long as it is retained, they receive the blame for things which, in the present composition of the National Council, their party could not prevent.

There are various catastrophic prophecies as to the future course of Swiss politics. Some foresee Socialism growing into a majority and a towering menace, with the result that all middle-class elements will be forced to take refuge in Catholic Conservatism, the party of authority and orthodoxy, religious and political—after which, presumably Armageddon, with either host triumphant according to the pipe-dreamer's predilections. Then there are soothsayers who fear the ruin of agriculture, the flocking of peasants to the city, higher food prices, lower wages—and another explosion along somewhat different lines of cleavage. Considering the relatively smooth and quite peaceful development of Switzerland in the course of the seven decades since 1848, during which the most sweeping transformations, economic and political, took place, it does seem that these Cassandras borrow a great deal of unnecessary trouble. Of course, heralds of a future of quiet evolution for the little Alpine republic rest their hopes upon general European settlement. Another Reformation or French Revolution, if any event of such universal shattering effect is on the way—Bolshevism perhaps, if it is destined to spread—will hardly leave Switzerland unscathed. Yet one must remember that, in spite of its diminutive size—partly indeed because of it—the country did escape two general bloodbaths: the Thirty Years' War and the World War.

There is every reason to believe that the Swiss, if left to themselves, will find orderly solutions for the problems confronting them. The most heated political antagonism surviving in the country is that between peasants and Socialists, yet neither are out for the others' heads, and reconciliation of their hostile interests, while not easy, is at least conceivable. Apart from this one area of inflammation there is an unusual amount of mutual understanding and good will among Swiss party leaders. Since 1848 the masses of the people have shown a marked willingness to adjust themselves to the political *fait accompli*, of whatever character. For example, the consequences of the Sonderbund civil war were accepted by the inhabitants of the defeated cantons with a maximum of promptness and a minimum of bitterness. True, no great amount of blood was shed in the course of the conflict, thanks to the humane tactics of the federal General Dufour. It is further true that the victorious radical statesmen went about the process of reconstruction in a thoroughly conciliatory spirit. Yet, both the humanity of the military leader in 1847 and the moderation of political leaders in 1848 were authentic Swiss traits, worthy of all respect in themselves and directly responsible for the peaceful aftermath of the war. Similarly with the results of the *Kulturkampf* in the early seventies, and with various important referendum decisions which, no matter how hardly contested and bitterly unsatisfactory to the defeated element, have always been accepted loyally.

---

[20] As these pages are being corrected for the press, the *Berner Bund* announces that on November 30, 1929, the Swiss Social Democratic party diet, meeting in Basel, decided by a vote of 324 to 137 in favor of accepting representation in the Federal Council. Dr. Emil Klöti, of Zürich, a member of the National Council since 1919 and president of that body in 1921–22, is to be their first candidate. Later reports announce the defeat of Dr. Klöti on December 11, 1929, by an Independent Democrat, Dr. Albert Meyer, of Zürich. On the same day a second vacancy in the Federal Council was filled by the election of Rudolf Minger of Bern, a leader of the Peasants' party.

One element of civic dissention common elsewhere is greatly attenuated in Switzerland because personal ambition with its attendant rancors counts for little in the politics of the country. In large part this happy condition is due to the dislike of voters, regardless of party, for candidates who possess inflated egos. The prevalence of blocs and the resultant spirit of compromise, especially since 1919, while anathema to those who prefer clear-cut decisions and definite responsibility, nevertheless have the advantage of compelling leaders of various parties to co-operate closely and thus to come to a better understanding of each other. Political contests in other lands with either the parliamentary or presidential system of government tend to take on the spirit of the duello, culminating as a rule in the pitting against each other of two or three great national leaders. Nothing of the sort ever happens in Switzerland. Once a candidate is elected to office, there is a tradition in favor of retaining him so long as he is willing to serve. Presidents, governors, mayors, and other one-man executives are virtually unknown; everywhere there are administrative boards each member of which, no matter how prominent in his own party, has to adjust his views to those of his four or six colleagues. It is seldom that any sudden party upset occurs; nationally, the only event of that sort in more than two generations was the election of 1919, when the introduction of proportional representation speeded up a process of readjustment which otherwise might have dragged through a decade or more. Even when a party is overthrown locally, no one raises the cry: "Turn the rascals out." In short there is a stability, or at least a slow-moving quality, about Swiss politics which may rob them of a certain sporting element but which certainly frees them from any undue personal antagonism.

As a contributory cause of the amenity of party life in Switzerland, the absence of corruption is even more important than the absence of the spoils system. Aristotle warned long ago against the bitterness likely to arise when the governing class monopolized both power and profits. In Switzerland office confers only moderate power upon the incumbent, the salary paid is less than moderate, and illicit gains virtually do not exist. Occasionally one may hear of a minor defalcation committed by some civil servant; but of bribery, almost never. Politicians are, *mirabile dictu*, honest; further, they know each other to be honest. In pointing out the shortcomings of opponents, whether in public utterances or the most confidential of private conversations, corruption is never listed. To the foreign observer from countries not entirely free from this vice it is quite obvious that the thoroughgoing honesty of Swiss public men is a prime factor in accounting for the unfeigned respect in which they hold each other and in which they are held by the people generally. Not that this respect estops rivalry and opposition, particularly in case a party leader threatens to grow too powerful. It may fairly be said, however, that the antagonism engendered in the latter event is largely the reflection of the widespread popular dislike of dominating personalities which, as we have seen, is one of the most marked of Swiss traits.

Finally, in talking with Swiss political leaders, one notes an unusual tolerance for the ends sought by their rivals. As a rule, they accept the principle implied by Gottfried Keller's oft-quoted lines:

> Acht jeden Gegner, wer er sei—
> Strauchdiebe bilden keine Partei,

namely, that the formation of a party is in itself evidence of honest intent. A thoroughgoing defender of the existing order will nevertheless grant unhesitatingly the essential desirability of the Socialist demand for the abolition of poverty. A Protestant official will recount the difficulties caused him by Catholic constituents, concluding the recital with a warm expression of admiration for their religious sincerity and the excellent moral influence exerted by school teachers of that confession. After enlarging upon the fact that he can discharge an incapable public employee who happens to belong to his own party without having to encounter the recrimination that would probably follow in case a bourgeois official did the same thing, a Socialist administrator will show surprising insight into the difficulties encountered by the capitalistic managers of a certain industry. Of course, this spirit of tolerance has not always existed; certainly it had developed to a slight extent only prior to 1848; it was gravely disturbed during the unsettled years at the beginning and end of the World War. Nevertheless, except in times of grave crises, it is a prominent and heartening characteristic of Swiss party life. Finally—and most important of all from the point of view of this study—it is undeniably true that the honesty and amenity of politics in Switzerland have a profoundly educative effect upon the civic character of the people of that country.

CHAPTER IV

EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF SWISS POLITICAL PARTIES

Discussion of the school system, to be presented later, will make it plain that the Swiss approach to life is distinctly more educational than that of other peoples. As a matter of fact, the trait obtrudes itself not so much in the schools as in other mechanisms of civic training where one would expect to find lurid enthusiasm rather than the pale cast of thought, e.g., in the army and in special patriotic associations. Experience elsewhere would indicate that political parties also are bound together to no small degree by sentimental considerations and sporting instincts. To be sure, Swiss parties do not lack these elements of cohesion, but in addition they have developed educational organizations of the most sweeping character. Indeed, from their point of view education has as broad a meaning as in the days of Plato, including both gymnastics and music, using the latter term, moreover, in its modern as well as in its ancient Greek sense. While the Swiss Socialist party has made the greatest progress along this line and will therefore be given special consideration in the following pages, it must not be assumed that other parties are indifferent to the training of their future members. Second only to the Socialists in the volume of work accomplished, the Catholic Conservatives have entered the educational and gymnastic field with a resourcefulness which, backed by religious fervor, should produce marked results within the next few decades. While liberal parties have as yet resisted in most cases the inclination to establish cultural or sporting organizations under their own management, it is apparent that they profit largely from the activities of "neutral" associations, such as the omnipresent shooting societies and athletic unions. Moreover, they unite among themselves occasionally for educational purposes, as in the Association of Swiss Citizenship Courses.

Considering the heavy burden of routine work in the way of organization and agitation which is imposed upon Swiss Socialist leaders, one finds it difficult to see how they find the apparently unlimited amount of time which they devote to the youth movement and to the education of future party members. The beginnings of the former go back to the early nineties, but most of the clubs of young workingmen in Luzern, Bern, and Basel which date from that period were short-lived. It was not until early in the present century that the movement showed much vitality. In 1900, Pastor Pflüger founded at Zürich an "Association of Like-minded Young Workers with the Purposes of Education and Friendship," which, despite its ponderous title, made converts and spread to other cities. At the end of the decade it counted 14 sections with 420 members, and in the year preceding the World War the latter number had grown to 763.[1]

With increasing strength the young Socialists affiliated with the international Jugendorganisation, sending delegates to its first Congress, held at Stuttgart, in 1906, and to the second at Copenhagen, in 1910. In their relations with the party and with the trade-union organization of Switzerland, however, they proved decidedly obstreperous. By a series of theses accepted in 1913, the three organizations succeeded in coming to an agreement whereby the Jugendorganisation bound itself to accept the party program and the resolutions of the party and of the trade-union association, receiving, in return, subsidies from both the others and the assurances of their moral support. Also, delegates from the youth movement were to receive a hearing at all party and trade-union congresses before which questions concerning the first-named came up for consideration.

During the World War membership in the Jugendorganisation leaped to 2,200. Great advances were made in the educational work carried on primarily for its benefit. Owing to unforeseen economic difficulties, however, the trade-union association was unable to pay the subsidies promised. Toward the end of the war it became evident also that the young Socialists were turning sharply toward the left. During the November troubles of 1917 many of them took part in street-rioting, and at the time of the general strike a year later their watchword was reported to be: "Disarm the soldiers." When the final breach came in 1920 between Socialists and Communists, nearly all the members of the youth movement went over bag and baggage to the latter, receiving rebaptism under the name of Kommunistische Jugendorganisation. Since the latter date, therefore, the Socialist party has had to face the task of building up anew an organization from which it can draw future members and leaders. By 1925, the work was fairly well established, a central committee being set up in Bern to look after the formation of new sections and to maintain contact between them and the party.

[1] Ernst Schenker, *Die sozialdemokratische Bewegung in der Schweiz von ihren Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Appenzell: Anzeiger-Druckerei, 1926), p. 73.

Recently the youth organization of the Swiss Socialist party has arranged each year a brief meeting *(Jugendtagung)* of its members in some attractive small town or rural district. For 1927 the place chosen was Lenzburg, invitations being sent broadcast through *Freie Jugend*, the organ of the movement, and the trade-union press generally, to all younger members of the laboring class, as follows:

Young Workingman,
Young Workingwoman,
COMRADES:

You have the school fortunately behind you; before you there stands a whole lifetime with a thousand questions and uncertainties. In the school you were trained to become a capable human being; you can read and write and do many other useful things.

Today you are perhaps an apprentice, or in a factory or an office, or perhaps you are a young peasant, a tailoress or shopgirl; and you see the world with quite other eyes now that you have taken this step into its midst. Listen, we also are young men and women exactly like yourself—the times have fastened their iron claws in us also; like you, we also feel the touch of need; before us also there rise a thousand questions—questions of life—and we know that money, occupation, good schooling, and the like are not everything that the young man or woman needs in life. And for these reasons, because we wish to know all these things and at the same time are suffering from the unspeakable need of the times, we have come together in order to talk with each other, to seek ways to help one another.

Yes, young friend, we know there are ways that lead forward; there are still possibilities to do away with poverty, worry, crime, and the bad housing conditions under which we suffer so much. There is a solidarity of mankind embracing the whole world, a movement for mutual help. That is socialism, that is the labor movement, the trade-union movement—in a word the socialistic movement—of which we are a part.

From all the valleys of Switzerland we, as friends and youthful comrades, are coming together on the third and fourth of September in Lenzburg to hold a Diet of Youth, in which we wish you to share with us. We wish to talk things out with you, together with you we will sing our songs, and dance our old folk dances. We wish that you may come to know our movement; youth is a grand time, but only when it is used for a great work. Socialism is a splendid goal, but it must be fought for, and our Diet of Youth shall be an effort to bring about this new world.

We call to you to meet together with us in Lenzburg. Come even if you are not acquainted with us, and do not yet know what socialism is. Yes, in that case particularly come, and sense the fact that in the hearts of many young men and women there dwells a faith, a hope in a better future.

It would be hard to conceive a more appealing invitation than the foregoing. The program for the Lenzburg *Jugendtagung* was a very short one—sports and recitations with much music, singing, and dancing, and, of course, an address on "Why We Fight for Socialism," followed by questions and open discussion. Accommodations were of the simplest sort, many of the delegates sleeping in haylofts and preparing their own food in the open. Even from a politically hostile observer, the Lenzburg gathering drew the following appreciative comment:

> I saw these buoyant young people march through the streets of the little town behind the red flag; I saw them at their sports, and gained the firm conviction that neither the flag nor the sports drew them together but solely the impulse to talk out among their fellows questions of politics and life.[2]

At the same time that the Socialist party was struggling with the youth organization, it undertook, in co-operation with the trade-union association, to develop an extended educational program. Although the purpose of the latter has always been to attract as many young men and women as possible, it has proved even more successful with persons of mature years, hence the temporary defection of the Jugendorganisation did not hamper its development. Even during the hard years of the World War it carried on, the list of lecturers for 1915–16 containing seventy-three names, eight members in the federal legislature included. So far as occupations were stated, fourteen were teachers, five were trade-union secretaries, and one a preacher. Ten of the lecturers were women, most of them prominent in the party or labor organization.

The educational work of the Socialist party was directed originally by a committee with headquarters in Bern. In 1922 it adopted a constitution, taking as its title, the Swiss Workers' Education Central (Schweizerische Arbeiterbildungszentrale, usually referred to as the S.A.B.Z).[3] At present the executive group is made up of a dozen members, equally divided between the party and the trade-unions, most of them being professional secretaries. The Central is assisted in carrying on its work, by some eighty local committees scattered throughout the country, a number reduced somewhat below that of a few years ago due to difficulties encountered in smaller communities. Carefully prepared pamphlets issued by the headquarters in Bern instruct members of local bodies how to initiate and conduct the lectures, courses, and workers' schools.[4] Other brief publications have been

[2] Dr. A. Guntert, "Zwischen Schule und Volljährigkeit" in *Der Staatsbürger,* 12. Jhrg., Nr. 17 (September 1, 1928), S. 129.

[3] Offices at 61 Monbijoustrasse, Bern; secretaries, Ernst Reinhardt and Paul Graber.

[4] Two of these are especially valuable: *Wie veranstaltet man Vorträge, Kurse und Arbeiterschulen,* 1923; and *Die Durchführung der Bildungsarbeit,* issued by the Central as Flugschriften Nr. 4 and Nr. 8, respectively.

made from time to time, e.g., Robert Grimm's *Education and Class Struggle*, which went to two editions. Also, a monthly paper of eight pages or more serves to maintain contact between the Central and its affiliated committees.

Instructions issued from Bern are marked by no small degree of pedagogical acumen and reveal a determination to get solid educational results so far as conditions permit. Local bodies are urged to secure proper halls for meetings, if possible in community houses or school buildings. Quarters are to be rented in inns only as a last resort and with the agreement that intoxicating liquors are not to be served, since "alcohol and workers' education simply do not get along together." Even smoking is taboo out of consideration for other hearers and for the lecturer himself—a degree of virtue among Swiss Socialists that should prove surprising to students in many American graduate seminars.

More important than the suggestions regarding physical surroundings are those dealing with pedagogical matters. Local committees are warned that, while they may use single lectures and also educational motion pictures, dramatic presentations, and music programs to get a start in a community, they should bend every effort toward the establishment of a regular course of lectures to be given during the winter and early spring. As soon as possible, another course should be added; and as the work grows, the more dignified title of Workers' Division or Workers' School is to be assumed.

It may be taken for granted that lecturers whose names are carried in the list prepared by the Central do not neglect unduly the Socialist point of view in their discourses. On the other hand, they are warned that in educational work something else is needed beside the "rough-hewn agitator's speech." Consideration of the titles of lectures and courses offered shows that topics of an extremely serious, not to say dry, character predominate to a degree which one who does not know the Swiss passion for education would deem improbable. From recent annual reports of the Central the following general headings are taken: (*a*) Economics and Law; (*b*) Art and Literature; (*c*) Hygiene and Sport; (*d*) Education; (*e*) Philosophy and Religion; (*f*) History and Geography; (*g*) Natural Sciences and Technology.

As examples of courses of lectures which would fall under the first of these headings may be cited: (1) "Modern Capitalism," (2) "Economic Doctrines of Karl Marx," (3) "The Social Democratic Program," (4) "Principles of the Social Democratic Party," (5) "History of Social Democratic Theories," (6) "Co-operative Movement,"

(7) "The Worker as Producer and Consumer," (8) "Co-operation in Production," (9) "Co-operative Milk Supply," (10) "The Place of Women in Co-operative Societies," (11) "Co-operatives and Trade-Unions," (12) "History of the Trade-Union Movement," (13) "The Swiss Trade-Union Movement," (14) "Theory and Practice of Modern Trade-Unions," (15) "Activities and Tactics of Trade-Unions." Of recent years the Swiss Workers' Education Central has encouraged trade-unions to undertake lecture courses on their own account. Organizations of laborers employed in various branches of the civil service, in commerce and transportation, embroidery-making, printing and paper-making, and in textiles have made a beginning with such educational work on their own account already. In general the courses offered under trade-union auspices run more to technical subjects designed to improve quality of workmanship; but economic and political theories, tinged, of course, with Marxianism, are not neglected.

Under the auspices of the Central 52 courses and 345 separate lectures were reported for 1927–28, the total attendance being 2,243 enrolled in courses, and 35,287 auditors. Not that lighter features are neglected, for during the same year there were offered under the auspices of local educational committees 33 concerts, 40 dramatic representations, 31 moving-pictures, 30 visits to local points of interest, and 4 longer excursion trips to various foreign cities—the total attendance being 84,718. Lest the Swiss worker be made to appear too solemn a fellow, it should be remarked at once that nearly a third of the foregoing total was contributed by theatrical entertainments. The latter and the longer excursion trips are so highly effective for educational and propagandist purposes that they will be discussed somewhat in detail later.

Attendance totals have a habit of looking impressive; indeed, they are usually concocted for that purpose. In comparison with trade-union and Socialist party membership, however, the figures for lectures and courses are lamentably small, a fact the Swiss Workers' Education Central admits with undisguised bitterness. Such success as the movement has attained—and it is creditable—has been against heavy handicaps. From the beginning, financial difficulties had to be met, rendered acute at times, as in the years following the war, by industrial depression. It is out of the question to charge tuition for the courses offered, and the nominal fees sometimes required are returned as a rule to those who have been regular in attendance. Subsidies have been granted from party and trade-union funds, but of necessity these were small. It is the hope of Swiss leaders that an education tax, such as is in vogue in Austria, may be voted by members of their organizations. For 1927 the total income of the Central was less than 20,000 francs. Local committees sometimes secure small subsidies from communal and cantonal budgets, but here again by far the greater part of the burden is shouldered by party and trade-unions.

In 1922 an effort was made by the Central to obtain a federal subsidy of 15,000 francs in support of its educational activities, but the appropriation was voted down in both chambers. From an outside point of view considerable assurance would seem necessary to make application for governmental appropriations in aid of the work of an opposition party. Granting its educational utility, the Marxian tendency of courses and lectures is frankly admitted. In Switzerland, however, it is the custom of all worthy causes—which means all causes that consider themselves worthy, which again means all causes—to ask for federal subsidies; and such requests are so frequently granted that the application of the Workers' Central for aid in its educational work aroused no unusual interest. Socialists, of course, protested against the spirit of economy on the part of the federal chambers which was alleged as the ground for voting down their subsidy, intimating that peasant unions would not have been refused financial aid in far larger amounts. In the reports of the Workers' Central somewhat envious reference is often made to the generous grants voted by certain cantonal governments to the *Volkhochschule* movement, by means of which the latter is able to enlist numbers of distinguished university professors in carrying on its "bourgeois" extension work.

A second difficulty which bulks large in the reports of secretaries of local education committees is due to the fact that the Socialist party has succeeded only too well in organizing its members, particularly the more youthful of them, for other activities. Accounts of conflict with workers' sport clubs are referred to constantly. One local education secretary, evidently at his wit's end, states that his small community has the following clubs: Workers' Bicycle Club, Workers' Gymnastic Club, Workers' Musical Society, a Mixed Choir (made up of members of the working class), Football Club, and Yodler Club (almost entirely made up of members of the same class), a Labor Union, Building Workers' Trade-Union, and a Textile Workers' Trade-Union. The first four of these and the Yodlers oblige with one or two public "offerings" each year, and the regular meetings of the various organizations named make it almost impossible to find a date for a single lecture, to say nothing of a course. A tragic situation, indeed! which will elicit the full comprehension and deepest sympathy of faculty members in the typical, overorganized American college. At times an effort is made to enlist one of the other organizations in the cause of education. Thus, in some towns the Workers' Singing Society is called in to render a *Lied* at the beginning and again at the end of a lecture. But on one such occasion, it is related, after a discourse on "Alcohol and the Laboring Class," in which the speaker had unsparingly castigated the evils of drink, the singers chose for their number the "Schwäbischen Fiedelmann," a topers' song which would delight Bacchus himself.

In the reports of the Central there is a certain, but scarcely sufficient, recognition of the fact that the educational repasts it dishes up are somewhat hard of digestion. Often enough the remark is made, however, that after long hours of toil workers are in no condition, physical or mental, to devote themselves to arduous intellectual activity. Even on Saturday afternoons when the workers are free, they are too tired for effective study. Sunday mornings are considered the best time for lectures, but the claims of other organizations and a natural desire for rest and recreation keep many away then; so that usually it is necessary to schedule educational meetings for some week-day evening.

Considering the difficulties met by the Central and its local helpers, one is not surprised to find a note of pessimism in their reports. The same small town secretary quoted above comes, as a result of his experience, to a conclusion strikingly like that of Swiss middle-class reformers, namely, that the young people of today are decadent; worse still, he adds the conviction that "for our generation bread, sports, and alcohol suffice." It is, however, somewhat surprising to learn on the authority of Socialists, who make so much of mass movements, that: "Education is not a mass question! The mass is not hungry for education."[5] Perhaps they may derive a measure of consolation from the fact that the statements quoted are equally true for masses of any kind, whether capitalistic or proletarian in composition. The sincerity of the point of view expressed above is best shown in the urgent advice contained in the instructions of the S.A.B.Z. to break up large classes into small seminar groups for purposes of discussion. In any event, the lecturers and teachers engaged in the movement deserve credit for persisting against so many obstacles; certainly they have earned over and over again the modest degree of success that has been theirs.

In view of the attendance figures, one gains the impression from the reports of the Central that there may be something of a defense reaction in the oft-repeated statement of its purpose to train not the masses but a select few. Nevertheless, local committees are urged to keep a sharp lookout for keen young men and women who show promise of developing into party leaders and workers *(Vertrauensmänner)*. As soon as possible, they are to be given places on the local education committees and set to work for the cause themselves. While the purpose of training capable party workers runs through all the activities of the S.A.B.Z., it has been emphasized particularly in the vacation courses which have been offered annually beginning with the summer of 1922. Since 1924 they have assumed, not without warrant, the title of Workers' Summer School.

---

[5] *Durchführung der Bildungsarbeit,* Flugschrift Nr. 8 of the S.A.B.Z., p. 5.

A picturesque spot suitable for recreation as well as for study is chosen from among the many Switzerland has to offer for the Workers' Summer School. In 1924 and again in 1925, Sundlauenen on Lake Thun, 12 minutes distant from Interlaken, was selected; and in 1926, the charming village of Tesserete near Lugano. Two years later the Selibühl shelter hut, located at an elevation of 1,700 meters, was chosen, but the weather proved so inclement that it is not likely to be used again. By arrangement of the S.A.B.Z., a modest hotel is secured for the use of instructors and students, the rate per day for both food and lodging being only 7 francs, amounting to a total of less than 100 francs for the term of two weeks. Attractive illustrated announcements, not unlike those gotten out by American summer schools, are sent to party and trade-union locals, each of which is invited to elect delegates as students, if necessary aiding them by small subsidies. The Central also has a fund which is used to supplement local aid. So far, the largest attendance recorded was 75, at Tesserete in 1926. There is no tuition fee, the only considerable expense in addition to board and lodging which students have to meet being for railroad fare. In aid of the first vacation courses given at Zürich during the summer of 1922, the federal Department of the Interior contributed 1,000 francs, the cities of Bern and Zürich, 200 francs each, the school board of the latter opening the halls of the Polytechnikum for lectures and seminar meetings. A new educational feature was added by the S.A.B.Z. in 1928, when a second summer course *(Funktionärkurs)* was presented at Luzern especially for party and trade-union officials, 32 of whom attended.

At the second Sundlauenen summer school, courses were offered as follows: (1) "The Fundamental Forms of Capitalistic Economy," six lectures, Instructor Robert Grimm; (2) "High Capitalistic Economic Forms—Cartels, Trusts, Syndicates, Vertical and Horizontal Concentration of Capital, Effect of Cartels and Trusts upon Swiss Economy and the Swiss Labor Movement," three lectures, Instructor Ernst Reinhard; (3) "The Work of the Political Labor Movement," three lectures, Instructor August Huggler; (4) "The Work of the Trade-Union Movement," six lectures, Instructor Karl Dürr. Three of the instructors, Grimm, Reinhard, and Huggler, were members of the National Council at the time, the first-named being editor-in-chief of the *Berner Tagwacht*, the leading Socialist newspaper of Switzerland; the other two, president and secretary, respectively, of their national party organization. Karl Dürr, the fourth of the lecturers at Sundlauenen, is a recognized authority on the Swiss trade-union movement.

Socialist summer-school students rise at the Spartan hour of 6:00 A.M. for gymnastic exercise, which, however, is not compulsory; breakfast is served at half-past six; lectures begin at seven, lasting until nine; the students' being free for recreation thereafter, except for the *Mittagessen*, until 5:00 P.M., when they meet in seminars which continue until seven o'clock, the dinner hour. Each student is required to prepare during the term at least one oral report or written theme for presentation and discussion at small group meetings. After the dinner hour students are again free for recreation, but as a rule they employ the evenings in study, using the special library temporarily installed for reference purposes, or in informal discussion groups. Every effort is made to establish close contact between instructors and students, the Swiss following in this respect the fine tradition of British Labour Colleges, where, it is said, "if there are 30 students and 1 teacher there are 31 teachers and 31 students." Further, it is the purpose of the Workers' Summer School to so instruct those in attendance that upon return home they will be able to carry on their own education unaided. All in all, the methods employed are strikingly similar to those of honors courses in American colleges and universities.

It has been thought desirable to describe the work of Socialist summer schools at some length because of its novelty as a party device and also because of the large degree of success, all things considered, which has been achieved. Returning students have fully met the hopes of the S.A.B.Z. by their subsequent activities in party and trade-union circles. Perhaps the Swiss are too easily impressed by anything which presents itself in pedagogical form; but, however this may be, certain it is that leaders of other parties concede in private conversation a somewhat grudging admiration for the results attained at Sundlauenen and Tesserete. The high quality of the instruction given is guaranteed by the training and experience of the instructors. But beyond the purely educational features of the work, it must be a great and inspiring privilege for younger party members to meet teachers who are also distinguished party leaders, and especially to come into close contact with them in seminar rooms.

The S.A.B.Z. has kept in touch at all times with similar organizations in neighboring countries, especially in Germany, Austria, and Belgium, often inviting foreign leaders to make lecture tours in Switzerland. At the international conference on workers' education held in Brussels during the summer of 1922, delegates sent by the Central organization in Bern supported a resolution for the exchange of students, in compliance with which 11 unemployed Swiss workmen were subsidized later to attend the Academy of Labor at Frankfurt a. M. At the same meeting another motion was passed in favor of undertaking longer excursion trips to familiarize party members and trade-unionists with conditions in other countries, particularly as regards their educational movements. A year later the S.A.B.Z. experimented with the proposal, sending 40 representatives on a tour through German cities. It was an unqualified success—so much so, indeed, that two trips arranged the following summer were taken by 988 excursionists. Every courtesy was shown the visitors, not only by German party comrades and trade-unionists, but by officials, including those of the German embassy at Bern who supplied passports and were helpful in all preliminaries. The cost for the 11 days, including fees, railroad tickets, hotel bills, and *Trinkgelder*—which in these degenerate days even Socialists seem to pay—was only 149.15 francs. Berlin, Hamburg, and Frankfurt were the stopping places, the excursionists visiting the usual points of interest in each but devoting themselves particularly to labor headquarters, industrial plants, schools, co-operative societies, and people's theaters. The subsequent success of the plan has been phenomenal; in it the S.A.B.Z. has at last found a form of education which, unlike lecture courses, attracts large numbers of rank and file workers. Meanwhile other countries have undertaken similar excursions, and Europe is fast becoming familiar with trainloads of touring toilers industriously making acquaintances among comrades in foreign cities.

No part of the work of the S.A.B.Z., as we have had occasion already to observe, is more popular than its dramatic presentations. Swiss of all classes take naturally to acting, and Socialist party leaders therefore found it easy to develop workers' stages *(Arbeiterbühnen)* in a large number of cities and towns. Pending the preparation of a comprehensive list of good plays which, with the abundance of amateur talent at hand, can be produced easily and without the expenditure of any large amount of money, the Education Central suggests the following Swiss dramas: *Revolution des Herzens* by Felix Moeschlin, *Sturmzeit* by Paul Lang, and *Thomas Münzer* by Alfred Traber. A number of shorter pieces and one-act plays, several in dialect, are listed for use by smaller clubs and labor-unions. Foreign authors are not neglected, Gorki's *Nachtasyl* and Hauptmann's *Weber* being also suggested by the S.A.B.Z.

Development of workers' stages during the last few years has given a powerful impetus to Swiss Socialist playwrights. Many of their productions are occasional pieces, dealing, for example, with the attempted general strike of 1918;[6] some of them, because of the use of dialect, are of limited appeal, although all the more effective locally for that reason. Thus Alfred Traber's *De Schoeggel Tämperli git Bolizeywachtmeister* must have delighted audiences of Zürich Socialists with its racy humor at the expense of the local police department, which, incidentally, is convicted in farce-comedy manner of stupidity, brutality in dealing with laborers, servility in dealing with the wealthy, the use of prostitutes as informers, admiration for the methods of Mussolini—in fact, every abuse of power except, *mirabile dictu,* bribery.

It is a far cry from such rough and ready but highly effective satire to H. Treichler's *Der Aufstieg,* a trilogy of one-act pieces which in tragic crescendo depicts the fate of the proletarian mass, first, as dimly conscious of its will but lacking the power to follow the road indicated by its leader; second, as attempting to act but overcome by the ruling middle class, partly because of divided councils as to the means to be pursued; third, as triumphing at last, overthrowing the existing social system by violence. Brief, simple, passionate, climactic, *Der Aufstieg,* in spite of a tendency to blood and thunder, is a most impressive composition.

From a dramatic point of view the works of most Socialist playwrights suffer because of a marked tendency to depict the laborer, despite his superficial roughness, as the soul of natural nobility; the capitalist, on the other hand, as a crafty, blood-sucking human spider. For propagandist purposes on workers' stages their one-sided and highly partisan character doubtless makes them all the more effective. Audiences of bourgeois sympathies often react sharply against them. Thus, when *Massemensch* and *Hinkemann*, by the German Socialist dramatist Ernst Toller, were produced in Bernese theaters patronized by the middle class, a veritable storm broke loose, and the municipal administration was severely criticized for permitting the stage to be used for the dissemination of subversive doctrines.

---

[6] Cf. Jakob Howald, *D'r Landesstreik, nes bärndütsches Theaterspiel i drei Ufzüge* (Olten: Trosch, n.d.).

Under the auspices of the S.A.B.Z. local groups of workers often devote evenings to recitations and musical offerings. For the former and other festival occasions a number of collections, mostly from German and Austrian sources, are available.[7] The love of the Swiss for music is not neglected by Socialist organizers, although, of course, it offers nothing like the same possibilities for propaganda as the drama. No local is too small to have a singing society.[8] In larger centers there are quite creditable workers' orchestras and bands. While mostly in demand for proletarian occasions, the latter are sometimes called upon to provide music for municipal concerts in city parks or public squares, dividing the evenings perhaps with crack military bands from neighboring barracks.

With the development of the radio in Switzerland efforts are being made by the S.A.B.Z. to utilize it for educational work.[9] Under the law of October 14, 1922, each receiving-station pays the government an annual fee of 10 francs, a fifth of the income therefrom being retained by the federal telephone administration, the remainder being divided among private concerns which maintain the sending-stations. As a result the latter are keenly interested in increasing the number of radio fans throughout the country, among whom already there are, of course, many workers' families. The S.A.B.Z. furthers the efforts of the broadcasters by distributing information on the subject to its following and by calling in the assistance of the Metal Trades Association through which workers' families may purchase apparatus and repair parts of uniform design at minimum cost. The next step in the program is to be the circulation of petitions among members having receiving-sets asking that the sending-stations include addresses by Socialist orators in their programs. Thus the instruments of the capitalist Mammon are to be put to work in the service of Marxism.

---

[7] Ernst Klar, *Worte der Weihe, Prologe für Arbeitervereine und Feste* (München: Verlag M. Ernst, 1905); Ernst Preczang, *66 Prologe für Arbeiterfeste* (Berlin: Vorwärts, 1911); Gustav Slekow, *Proletarische Feste* (Linz a D.: Holzwirt, 1926); and the *Kouplet-Buch,* a collection of satirical political verses (published by A. Hoffmann, Berlin, n.d.).

[8] Workers' singing societies use collections such as *21 Lieder für Gemischte und Frauen-Chore* (Basel: Schweiz. Arbeitersangerverband, 1922); also a German work, by August Albrecht, *Jugend Liederbuch* (Berlin: Arbeiterjugend-Verlag, 1925), of which more than 350,000 copies have been sold; and the *Österreichisches Proletarier Liederbuch* (Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, n.d.), of which 120,000 copies have been sold. At present (1929) the S.A.B.Z. is preparing a comprehensive collection of Swiss working-class songs for publication.

[9] See *Die Radiotelephonie im Dienste des Arbeiterbildungswesens,* by Professor Schenkel, Flugschrift Nr. 7, S.A.B.Z., 1925.

Of course the educational work of the Socialist and other parties and their sport organizations as well, are more highly developed in urban than in rural centers. In the former, larger funds and much greater numbers of helpers and participants are available. Work of both kinds is greatly facilitated for the Socialists by the People's Houses *(Volkshäuser)*, which have been erected in a number of cities —among them Bern, Basel, Zürich, and Luzern—all of them modern, solid, clean, and well-managed buildings. These afford halls, ordinarily used for moving-picture or theatrical entertainments and large enough to accommodate occasional meetings of party diets, a number of smaller assembly and lecture halls, still smaller rooms and offices for the use of party or trade-union committees and their secretariats, comfortable lodgings and baths on the upper floors, and a large restaurant where good food is sold at low prices on the ground floor. In some cities—Bern, for example—the latter dispenses drinks, mostly beer and light wine; in others, the general principle of the party which is hostile to alcohol is observed. Thus, in Zürich the restaurant of the *Volkshaus* is leased to the local woman's association (Zürcher Frauenvereinigung), which provides cheap hot foods at unbelievably low prices and is largely patronized by poorer people, in spite of its aggressively dry policy. Indeed, it forbids also the popular Jass and other games of cards, closes the place Sundays during divine services, and displays placards upon the walls which a less discriminating, or less hungry, clientèle might well find insulting, as follows:

> Der Zürcher Frauenverein
> f. alkoholfreie Wirtschaften
> lehnt ansdrücklich jede Haftung
> für Diebstahl oder Beschädigung
> von Eigentum der Gäste, welche in
> seinen Localen verkehren, ab.[10]

It would be impertinence, perhaps, for an observer from a prohibition country to sit in judgment upon the two policies pursued; suffice it to say, that while both *Volkshäuser* are constantly crowded, the one at Bern far surpasses that at Zürich in the appearance, energy, and social spirit of its guests. Whether or not inspired by the success of such establishments in large cities, communal houses *(Gemeindehäuser)*, of course on a smaller scale but open to all classes of citizens, have been erected in many small towns and rural districts throughout Switzerland. Movements are now on foot to increase their number considerably. Chief among the organizations engaged in this work is a foundation known as the Stiftung für Gemeindestuben und Gemeindehäuser, which in the first ten years of its existence (1919–29) has aided in the establishment of ninety communal houses and rooms in every part of Switzerland. Communal houses become true social centers for the local population, supplying facilities for library, lecture, dramatic, musical, athletic, and charitable organizations.

---

[10] Translated: "The Zürich Women's League for Alcohol-free Inns expressly disclaims all responsibility for theft or damage to the property of guests who frequent its establishments."

Although not included under the heading "education," that term being reserved for efforts primarily made on behalf of the young, all Swiss parties engage largely in propagandist activities designed to reach their adult members, some forms of which are novel in character and highly instructive in content. So far as ordinary campaign materials—pamphlets, leaflets and the like, of which there is a large output—are concerned, nothing unusual is produced either for elections of new National Councils or for initiative and referendum votes, with the single exception of campaign posters.[11]

On the other hand, all the larger Swiss parties publish an annual report on their activities *(Tätigkeitsbericht)*, with which may be included, although they are sometimes separately issued, a financial statement *(Geschäftsbericht)* and a stenographic report *(Protokoll)*, or at least an extended summary, of the discussions and proceedings of their annual diets. Ordinarily the report on the activities of a year runs to a bulky pamphlet of more than one hundred pages, in which are presented the statements of the executive committee and the party secretariat; of all standing committees including those charged with publicity, cantonal organizations, and the parliamentary fraction of the party; also of auxiliary organizations, e.g., youth and sport associations. Next are presented briefly the resolutions voted by the party diet on pending political issues, particularly such as are being brought before the electorate for initiative or referendum vote.

If published separately, the *Protokolls* of party diets run to even greater length, say 150–200 closely printed pages. They present not only the decisions reached on pending issues, whether parliamentary or initiative and referendum measures, but also the oratory which preceded the final vote. Financial statements are briefer, but they are all the more remarkable in that, wholly without legal compulsion, they exhibit in detail every considerable item of party contributions and expenditures. In making their collections, Socialists use stamps which are sold for a franc each to enrolled members, the greater part of the receipts of the party being raised by this means, although small voluntary gifts are also requested for special purposes, such as initiative and referendum campaigns. The greatest economy is displayed in expenditures; charges of extravagance or graft are unknown in this connection. For 1925 the national organization of the Social Democratic party spent a total of 140,316.82 francs (about $28,000.00). In the general election of that year its candidates received 3,659,652 votes, the average cost per vote thus being less than 1 cent.[12] Members of other parties are expected to make small contributions to their cantonal organizations, amounting in the case of Independent Democrats to a minimum of 5 francs a year. Out of the sums thus received the cantonal organizations send at least 350 francs for each representative it has elected to the National Council to the central party treasury in Bern. The corresponding statute of the Catholic Conservative party provides that, on the average, 100 francs for each 1,000 party members shall be forwarded annually by local party authorities to the national organization. All parties apparently call upon their following from time to time for *Kampfonds*, i.e., for special contributions to be used in fighting for or against referendum measures. According to the secretary of the Independent Democratic party, which includes many of the richest men of Switzerland in its membership, the largest individual gift ever received by his organization amounted to 1,000 francs, and it, by the way, was earmarked for use not in an election but in an initiative campaign. Wealthy candidates do not dare to use money in their own behalf, the mere suspicion that they were doing so would insure their defeat. Corrupt practices acts are unknown and unnecessary; public opinion takes care of all such matters automatically.

---

[11] For a discussion of this comparatively new development in Swiss campaigning, see chap. xiv.

In this connection it may be well to observe that Swiss voters generally are not to be won by artifices which thrive elsewhere. Candidates are not expected to thrust themselves forward; political ambitions, which, of course, spring eternal in many patriot breasts, must be kept carefully under cover. Openly, at least, the office seems to seek the man; his friends and party associates do most of the talking in his behalf, although usage permits him to set forth his views on public questions in a dignified letter which appears in the local press. It is asserted that the real reason for the many indirect forms of political solicitation employed in Switzerland—civics courses, educational schemes, sport organizations, shooting clubs, dramatic clubs, singing societies, workers' bands, and the like—is that, as a rule, direct solicitation reacts disadvantageously. In witness whereof—and so astounding a statement does require evidence—the sad history is recounted of a certain citizen who emigrated to the United States, and acquired a modest fortune, at the same time familiarizing himself with our campaign methods, which seemed to him immensely more effective than those employed in the slow and sleepy land of his fathers. Returning at length to his natal Schaffhausen, he decided to run for office on the American plan, announced his own candidacy, hired halls, made speeches, perhaps even distributed cigars to the honest and wondering electors. Apparently his campaign was phenomenally successful, at least his meetings were crowded to the doors by audiences which seemed deeply interested. What our political innovator forgot was that the Swiss always attend public gatherings; what he did not perceive was that secretly they were amused beyond measure. Election day came; and when all the returns were in, there was hardly a vote to his credit. Thus ended a promising political career, a thing to be regretted perhaps, since, apart from his too great fondness for American methods, our candidate was reputed a quite capable person. And with it ended the possibility of enlivening and speeding-up of Swiss politics, for, whether true or false, the story is told solemnly to ambitious youngsters who wonder whether the cautious, not to say pussyfooting, tactics of elder statesmen are after all most effective in alluring voters.

---

[12] Expenditures were made also by cantonal and local organizations, but no statistics are available on the subject. The large total of more than three million Socialist votes referred to in the text, which, of course, is far in excess of the number of party members, is due to the fact that under proportional representation each elector has the right to vote for as many members of the National Council as his canton has seats in that body. On this point cf. chap. ii.

Returning to Swiss reports of party activities with their accompanying financial statements and *Protokolls* of diets, it must be admitted that the matter they contain is, on the whole, extremely dry reading. Nevertheless, the practical politicians of the country down to committeemen *(Vertrauensmänner)* in the precincts are apparently much more given to reading than their confrères in the United States. Of course, members of the rank and file seldom trouble themselves with the actual official documents of their party. On the other hand, they would find it rather hard to avoid the extended summaries of them which appear unfailingly in the press. Particularly is this true of debates in the annual diet upon important questions of policy, always including initiative and referendum measures. Often the fate of the latter is decided by resolutions passed in such bodies according to which party members are advised to vote for or against, or, it may be, are left free *(Stimmfreigabe)* to reach their own conclusions.

American observers often wonder why, in Switzerland, the classic land of direct legislation, publicity pamphlets are not employed. In large part the need for such aids to voters is met by the action of party diets, made known through official reports, through the press, and by special campaign leaflets dealing with each measure submitted. On two occasions extended documents resembling somewhat the publicity pamphlets familiar to the practice of our western states were issued by the central secretariat of the Independent Democratic party.[13] Both of them, however, are much more largely given to scholarly discussion of general political questions than to the presentation of pros and cons on pending issues. The same is true of a three-year survey issued by the secretariat of the Catholic Conservative party in 1925.[14] In addition to such documents as the foregoing a continual barrage of reports is kept up by associations closely affiliated with the parties. Thus labor publications, including particularly those of the civil servants' and railroaders' unions,[15] contain much matter bearing upon Socialist policies.

The Peasants' party benefits more largely than any other from auxiliary publications. Aided by federal subsidies, the secretariat of the closely affiliated Swiss Peasants' Union issues a series of reports on agricultural subjects which are equally valuable from the scientific and the practical points of view.[16] In 1922 it published a review summarizing the work accomplished during the preceding quarter-century.[17] The Union has nearly ten thousand voluntary assistants scattered through the country, who report to it on local agricultural prices. At the secretariat in Brugg these reports are digested, the results being published in three languages in the organ of the association, the *Schweizerische Bauernzeitung*, which is then distributed as a supplement to the agricultural journals published in the various sections of the country. During the season some fourteen numbers of the *Bauernzeitung* are issued, the average circulation of each being in excess of 170,000. Three of the largest radio stations of Switzerland are also used twice weekly to send out market reports. Naturally, the peasants greatly appreciate these services and also the work done by the Union in forecasting harvests at home and abroad, in testing types of agricultural machinery, in estimating land prices and arranging inheritances, in supplying plans for building chalets, and in finding places for, and advancing credit to, rural laborers who have saved a little money and wish to undertake farming on their own account. With the powerful and devoted following which has thus been built up it is not strange that the annual assemblies of the Peasants' Union receive as much attention in the Swiss press as the diets of the larger parties.[18] Resolutions passed at these assemblies on pending legislative and referendum measures have the backing of the strong fraction of the Peasants' party in the federal chambers and of the heavy voting strength of the party in the rural sections of the country.

---

[13] *Politisches Jahrbuch der freisinnig-demokratischen Partei der Schweiz* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1921), and *Die öffentlichen Aufgaben der Gegenwart und Zukunft* (Bern: Iseli, 1925), both edited by Dr. E. Steinmann, central secretary of the Party.

[14] *Die schweizerische konservative Volkspartei, 1922–1925,* by Dr. Paul Kubick, Parteisekretär (Bern: Bargezzi u. Luthy, 1925).

[15] The annual *Bericht und Rechnung* of the S.E.V. *(Schweizerischer Eisenbahner-Verband)* and the annual *Bericht* of the *Schweizerischer Verband des Personals öffentlicher Dienste* each run to over 200 closely printed pages.

[16] Subsidies for similar purposes are also granted by the federal government to commercial, industrial, and labor associations. In this way many documents which are issued by other governments through their departments of commerce, industry, labor, and agriculture, are in Switzerland primarily the work of private bodies aided by grants from the public treasury.

Two of the larger Swiss parties issue monthly journals of a high order of merit. That of the Socialists is entitled the *Rote Revue;* of the Independent Democrats, the *Politische Rundschau.*[19] Each contains articles not only on pending issues but also on historical and general political themes, the contributors being members of the federal chambers, party leaders, administrators, journalists, teachers, professional secretaries, and others who write with authority on their special topics. It is not too much to say that, while tinged with partisanship, the pages of these two journals represent as high an intellectual standard as those of the *American Political Science Review.* Similar

[17] *Festschrift herausgegeben vom Schweizerischen Bauernverband zu seinem 25. jährigen Jubiläum, 1897–1922* (Brugg: Essingerhof, 1922).

[18] The Peasants' Union publishes annually a *Stenogramm der Verhandlung der ordentl. Delegiertenversammlung,* which corresponds to the *Protokolls* issued by major political parties; also a *Jahresbericht* resembling the annual reports of the latter.

[19] E. Nobs and Fr. Heeb are editors of the *Rote Revue,* which is printed by the Genossenschaftsdruckerei, Zürich. Dr. E. Steinmann, central secretary of the Independent Democratic party, Bundespl. 2, Bern, is editor and publisher of the *Politische Rundschau.*

publications in the interest of our own national parties are unthinkable. Nevertheless, the *Rote Revue* and the *Politische Rundschau* are reputed to exert a powerful influence upon the intelligentsia of their respective parties, and through them upon Swiss politics in general.

SOCIALIST SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to fostering educational activities, the Swiss Socialist party devotes a large share of attention to sport organizations. There is, however, a striking difference between the two movements. Whereas the educational work of the party seeks to develop leaders and formally abjures mass tactics, its athletic program frankly discourages stars and is directed toward winning the largest possible number of adherents. So far as the latter purpose is concerned, the degree of success attained is truly remarkable, even if one takes into account the passion of the Swiss people for athletics.

Before the World War the development of sport organizations under the auspices of the party had been slow but steady. Beginning with 1918 the upward movement was rapid; and although checked temporarily during the lean years which followed, it now gives promise of further rapid advance. At the beginning of 1928 the three principal organizations numbered over 36,000 members, among whom, however, there were doubtless many duplications. According to party sources some 13,000 of the foregoing were actively engaged in gymnastics and other outdoor sports, the remainder being either "old boys" who crowd the side lines at meets, or juniors who are preparing for future participation. More recently the Catholic Conservative party also has begun to foster sport organizations, so that today the old line middle class *(bürgerliche)* athletic associations, which are presumed to be politically neutral, find themselves threatened both from the left and from the right.

Various reasons are given for the interest of the Socialist party in the physical culture of its members. Workingmen in particular, it is asserted, need exercise—negatively to overcome the results of poor housing conditions and their one-sided muscular development resulting from certain trades and from factory work generally; positively to improve their health and to increase their economic productivity. If one asks why, this being the case, laborers and employees do not join the innumerable sport organizations already in existence in Switzerland, answers are promptly forthcoming. In the first place it is stated that sometimes the fees charged by the latter are too high for the workingman's pocket, or that, in any event, the clothing worn, and the customs prevailing in them make the man of small means feel uncomfortable. Of course the older neutral athletic associations deny these assertions, maintaining, on the contrary, that they are paragons of economy and democracy. Whatever weight may be attached to the foregoing reasons assigned for, or rationalizations of, the Socialist sport movement, there can be no doubt as to the force of the consideration that open air sports are themselves a powerful school for the development of social relationships. Even more in Switzerland than elsewhere the ties formed in an athletic environment tend to persist. With their enormous membership and far-reaching influence the old-line gymnastic and shooting clubs of the country furnished striking proof of the foregoing consideration and must have supplied the strongest possible motive to political leaders to imitate them for party advantage.

Swiss Socialists have always maintained, moreover, that, consciously or not, the older gymnastic and shooting clubs were hostile to every form of radicalism. Sport for sport's sake is a beautiful slogan, but it made no appeal to them. Nor were they willing to admit that sport and politics have nothing to do with each other; on the contrary they have established a most thoroughgoing entente between the two. In point of fact the traditional gymnastic and shooting clubs of Switzerland, while free from formal relations with the conservative parties, accept subventions from the military department of the federal government, seek to prepare young men for army service, and lay great weight upon the cultivation of patriotic and civic spirit. All of which, under the present order of society, is anathema to socialists; indeed, one of them writes: "No class-conscious worker would dare to send his children to such courses, nor himself continue to belong to an organization which consciously and without concealment carries on forms of educational work which contradict Socialist views most sharply."[20]

While the Socialist sport movement has developed rapidly only during the last decade, it may claim a fair degree of antiquity. As early as 1874 the Grütliverein, at that time an association of artisans for purposes of self-improvement chiefly by educational means, founded gymnastic associations subsidiary to its general organization. They had some measure of success, but for thirty-five years remained sufficiently free from class consciousness to participate in the competitions of ordinary cantonal and federal gymnastic associations. In 1909,

[20] Ernst Weber, "Die Entscheidung im Arbeitersport und die Aufgaben der Partei," in *Rote Revue,* 8. Jhrg., Nr. 11 (July, 1929), S. 346.

however, certain sections of the Grütli gymnastic association seceded, their grievances being, first, the attitude of old-line clubs during the Aschbacher strike in Zürich, and, second, the refusal of a federal subvention. Five years later all the Grütlians left the federal gymnastic association. With the subsequent decline of their parent organization and the rise of the Socialist party it was only natural that most of them turned to the latter, a process which began in 1916 and was formally ratified at the Aarau delegate convention in 1929.

As at present organized, the Swiss Workers' Gymnastic and Sport Association (Schw. Arbeiterturn- und Sportverband, commonly abbreviated SATUS), the largest of the three athletic labor associations of Switzerland, numbers 250 sections with some 23,000 members.[21] It belongs to the International Socialist Association for Sport and Physical Culture, which has its headquarters at Luzern and therefore is more commonly referred to as the Luzern Sport International (abbreviated L.S.I.). The SATUS itself has a thorough cantonal and federal organization, the most characteristic feature of which is the right of the membership to subject proposed policies of importance to referendum; it issues various publications and carries on national festivals every three years, the most recent event of this character, held at Bern in 1926, being participated in by 112 sections of men and 36 sections of women athletes. In the forms of gymnastics which it cultivates the SATUS resembles the Swiss Federal Gymnastic Association, but there are significant differences of method which will be discussed in some detail later.

The second of the Socialist athletic organizations is the Workers' Bicycle Union of Switzerland, "Solidarity" (Arbeiterradfahrerbund der Schweiz, "Solidarität," usually abbreviated A.R.B.d.S.S.). Founded in 1905 as a subdivision of the German association of the same type, it became a separate national institution eleven years later, at which time it numbered 4,500 members. By the beginning of 1928 it had an enrolment of 11,400, divided among 271 sections. The bicycle union forbids racing entirely, encouraging, instead, group riding and tours by its members. It is extremely helpful to them by providing insurance at low rates against personal injury and property damage, and by arranging for the payment of customs duties and deposit charges, thus facilitating trips to foreign countries.

Third among the Swiss workers' organizations in this field is the tourist club, the Nature Friends (Touristenverein "Die Naturfreunde"). It has been in existence twenty years, and at the beginning of 1928 had more than 5,000 members distributed among 81 local groups. The purpose of the club is to promote a knowledge of, and love for, natural beauties, to secure their protection, and to further the development of youth of both sexes by encouraging walking tours *(Jugendwanderungen)*. Owing to the beginnings made along the latter line in the public schools, and doubtless also to the incomparable attractions of the country, the Nature Friends have been extraordinarily successful in promoting hiking among younger members of the Swiss working class. In addition, they lay claim to having broken the aristocratic monopoly of mountain climbing, formerly under the control of the Swiss Alpine Club. To further this form of sport, the Nature Friends have erected some thirty shelter huts in the higher mountain regions of the country, each affording accommodations for at least twenty persons. Incidentally, the sale of alcoholic liquors is forbidden in these shelters. Members of the club receive gratis its monthly publication, which is entitled *Berg Frei*.

---

[21] Kurt Düby, "Die schweizerische Arbeitersportbewegung" in *Rote Revue,* 7. Jhrg., Heft 3, 7 (November, 1927; March, 1928), S. 90, 218.

In addition to the three foregoing organizations, all of which are solidly established, efforts have been under way for some time to establish a fourth, to be known as the Swiss Workers' Shooting Union (Schweizerischer Arbeiterschützenbund). If successful, it will offer the same sort of competition to the Federal Shooting Union that is offered to the Federal Gymnastic Union by SATUS. It should be interesting to see how, under Socialist auspices, rifle practice can be carried on free from individual records which are more or less taboo in the three major sport organizations described above, and further free from militarist influence, since Swiss army regulations on the subject are, of course, the same for laborers as for members of other social classes.

Swiss workers who belong to their own class organizations pursue the same forms of sport as the older neutral associations, with the exception that mass playing is preferred as far as possible to the display of individual prowess. Quite apart from the latter point, they maintain, however, that the methods employed differentiate the two types of association sharply. With regard to methods followed by labor groups, a set of resolutions prepared by Dr. Steinemann and unanimously adopted by the congress of the Luzern Sport International at Helsingfors in 1927 affords some basis for judgment. In part the Steinemann resolutions read as follows:

> The male and female sexes enjoy the same rights and have the same duties in Socialistic sport. . . . . For each age group and for both sexes special

organizations are to be established, each with its own administration and conducting its own sports. . . . . Sport is not an end in itself for Socialists; it must serve to create a Socialistic civilization. . . . . Its first purpose is the promotion of the health and the economic capacity of human beings. . . . . Exercise must be carried on as a matter of principle in the open air; indoor exercise is to be resorted to only in case of necessity. . . . . Exercise with the body unclothed is to be preferred generally. . . . . Alcohol as the enemy of socialistic society, is to be combated in workers' sport. . . . . The second purpose [of Socialist sport] is the permeation of the masses with the thought that it is not the individual but society as a whole which is the bearer and creator of civilization; community thought must become strongly alive in the L.S.I. . . . . In all forms of sport the competitions of whole divisions, groups, or teams, i.e., mass contests in general, are to be especially cultivated and further developed. . . . . In socialistic sport the competitive struggle does not mean a longed-for opportunity to down an opponent by any and all means; the worker as sportsman respects his opponent at every moment as a fellow-man and comrade in sport. All competitions shall be carried on in comradely spirit and more as a finely developed, joyous play than as a severe, heavy struggle for victory. . . . . Records of individual performances kept by the national associations and at the headquarters of the technical committee of the L.S.I. must be supplemented by statistics of mass performances. . . . . The notion that exceptional performances are the personal achievements of individuals and therefore deserve particular distinction in the way of prizes, wreaths, diplomas, titles, press publicity, etc., must be antagonized.[22]

Workers' sport organizations in Switzerland accept the foregoing resolutions wholeheartedly. SATUS, for example, prohibits all prizes, permitting only the conferring of wreaths for mass achievements on great occasions. Even this vestige of "middle-class" methods it is hoped may soon be abolished. As another example, the Swiss Bicycle Union forbids its members to participate in races arranged by brother-workers in Germany and Austria whose organizations still continue that form of sport. Considering the extent to which the traditional gymnastic associations in Switzerland practice mass exercises, the stand taken by SATUS and the A.R.B.d.S.S. against individual contests appears all the more remarkable. Whether it can be continued without decline in interest remains to be seen. From the point of view of American sport, with its superfluity of "star" athletes and the interminable drool of the press regarding their achievements, it is impossible not to feel strong sympathy with reforms such as those proposed by Dr. Steinemann.

Socialist sport organizations in Switzerland are in one sense exclusive. The prospective member is required, as a rule, either to have a trade-union card or to belong to a political party which stands upon the basis of the class struggle—juniors, of course, excepted but only until qualified by age for one or the other. There has, however, been some difference of opinion regarding these requirements. On the one hand, the argument is made that, so far as the purpose of the organizations is to win adherents to socialism, it would be wiser to avoid exclusiveness in admitting applicants. In spite of the recent rapid growth of the workers' sport movement in Switzerland, there are said to be still from 70,000 to 80,000 laborers and employees in the traditional "middle-class" associations, to win whom, as soon as possible, should be the party purpose. On the other hand, it is argued that even more essential than increased numbers is the preservation of a strong Marxist spirit among the membership in order that it may be counted upon to work and vote solidly for the cause at all times.

---

[22] The Steinemann resolutions are quoted in full by Kurt Düby, *op. cit.*

So far as SATUS, the largest of the three workers' sport associations, is concerned, the point of view has come to prevail that closer relationship with the party is desirable. For six years following the split between Socialists and Communists in 1920, it sought to maintain neutrality, admitting both to its ranks and suffering from much heated internal dissention in consequence. At the Aarau delegate convention of SATUS in 1929, however, a resolution was passed in favor of forming a close alliance with the Social Democratic party (i.e., excluding the Communists) and the Trade Union Association. The Aarau resolution was submitted to a referendum of the membership, and after a campaign which attracted considerable attention in Communist centers was sustained by a vote of 3,753 to 2,584, the total number of ballots cast representing a participation of less than 30 per cent of those qualified. Of course, the conservative newspapers of the country viewed this decision with alarm as amounting to the final dropping of the "workers'" mask, revealing the ugly features of the Socialist party beneath. One might rather have expected them to rejoice that the more moderate of their adversaries had been victorious. Nor were sarcastic references wanting to the fact that only a short time before the federal legislature had, as part of the military budget, renewed its annual subvention of 22,000 francs to the SATUS.

There is a certain humor, which, however, in Switzerland is dulled by wont, in connection with the receipt by an anti-militarist and Socialist group of subsidies recommended by the war department of a "bourgeois" government. As to the political effectiveness of the workers' sport movement, there is, from an outside point of view, more than a little room for doubt. One wonders whether Switzerland is ripe for any sweeping change to say nothing of revolution, when large masses of alleged "reds" spend a considerable part of their time in wrestling, rowing, and artistic gymnastics *(Kunstturnen)* or on bicycle tours admiring the beauties of nature. Even if the times called for violent political upheaval, it might develop that the working class sportsmen preferred a game of football. Why should bourgeois elements alternately sneer at, or shiver over, the development of workers' sport organizations? It would perhaps be worth their while to applaud and to contribute liberally, trusting that thus socialism might gain in mass and lose in velocity.

In other words, too many side shows may detract from the main performance in the big tent under the red flag. That the success of the sport movement embarrasses considerably the Socialist leaders of the educational central we have already had occasion to notice. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that party organizers are convinced that it helps them to consolidate and to increase their voting following, in much the same way no doubt that Tammany district clubhouses aid the dominant machine in New York City. In the long uphill fight that Swiss Socialists are making with the hope of becoming a majority, it would be more than human for them to forego any effective method of proselyting. To the extent that this promotion of sports brings health and vigor to workers who otherwise might remain mere drudging slaves of the machine one must applaud the organizations they have fostered. Even in a country so thoroughly organized for athletics as Switzerland, it is conceded that the Socialist sport associations have considerably increased the total thus benefited. It is perhaps to be regretted that alleged breaches of neutrality on the part of the old-line sports movement should have afforded an excuse for party organizers to enter this field. On the other hand, now that the breach has occurred, it is probable that from comparisons of method—such, e.g., as are suggested in the Steinemann proposals—both forms of athletics may profit.

One of the best evidences of the success of sports as a means of consolidating party following is afforded by the efforts of the Catholic Conservatives to launch under their own ensign a system of clubs and athletic associations in which "may be inculcated the fundamentals of religious and moral education, without which all our political striving is vain." The movement had progressed so far by 1920 that a Catholic gymnastic festival held in Basel brought together 20 organizations with some 650 contestants. At the national diet of the party in

1927 a small special committee was appointed, later enlarged to a membership of 48, to bring about the systematic organization of the Catholic Conservative young manhood of the country. In the efforts subsequently made to that end, valiant aid has been given by spiritual as well as by lay leaders. A vigorous journalistic organ, *Die Schildwache,* which is often quoted both by friends and enemies, has been established. It is estimated that there are 100,000 young Catholic men in Switzerland, of whom not more than 15,000 are now politically organized. Some of the others, it is alleged, are enrolled in athletic organizations under Independent Democratic influence, or, worse still, under Socialist control, naturally a condition which seems unsatisfactory to leaders of the clerical party. In other words, the motive for the organization of the Catholic youth of the country is quite as fundamentally political as in the case of the workers' organizations described above.

There is every reason to anticipate the success of the clerical party in organizing separately their youth for sports and other purposes. During the last quarter-century it has created its own system of labor-unions *(die christlichsozialen Gewerkschaften),* clubs for men and women, for mothers, for young men and young women, sickness and invalidity associations, charity organizations, and a conservative banking institution. In 1929 it became known that nation-wide plans were on foot to encourage members of the church to deal as largely as possible with business men of their own faith. No small part of the power of the Catholic party in those sections of the country which it dominates is due to the network of clubs and organizations of every sort which it has called into existence.

Swiss conservative party leaders in general deplore secessions on either political or religious grounds from the old-line neutral sport organizations. With governmental subsidies, press notices, and social influence they are able to promote the latter effectively, little as assistance of the sort seems to be needed. From middle-class sources one often hears the expression that Socialists and Catholic Conservatives are deliberately prostituting sport for partisan profit. So far as educational policies affecting the young are concerned, the moderate parties of Switzerland have created an effective first-line of defense in the widespread system of civics courses *(Staatsbürgerkurse),*[23] although they are unwilling to admit that the latter are partisan in character. It is further true that political leaders of this school are keenly aware of the necessity of reaching down into the ranks of those not yet of voting age, arousing their interest in affairs of state, building up organizations if possible, and thus providing for a future replenishment of civic strength and leadership. The first formal movement in this direction dates from 1902, when sections *(Jungfreisinniger)* were established in Aargau. Subsequently, similar organizations have been set up in a dozen other cantons, delegates from all of which meet annually or oftener in national conferences at which the important issues of the day are discussed by national party leaders and debated by the assembly. It is not always the case that younger party members agree with their older colleagues; indeed, in two cities, Geneva and Lausanne, the former founded parties of their own in opposition to the cantonal party organization. Thus conservative as well as Socialist leaders in Switzerland have learned the lesson that youth organizations have a disconcerting habit of backfiring. The *Jungfreisinnige* devote themselves particularly to social and political reforms, and on various occasions have drawn up elaborate programs of principles and policies for the guidance of their elders.[24] Their journalistic organ, *Der Staatsbürger*, which serves also the purposes of the Association of Swiss Civics Courses, is an extremely well-edited eight-page paper which appears twice monthly. As an evidence of the continuing interest of conservative leaders in the organization of youth, it may be noted that at the conference of party secretaries, cantonal and national, of the Independent Democratic party, held at Tellsplatte in the summer of 1929, two of the principal reports presented dealt with the efforts being made along that line in all sections of the country.

---

[23] See chap. x.

The activities of Swiss parties, apart from those primarily political in character, are so manifold that one may well wonder how leaders manage to keep them going. Nothing seems to have escaped the latter with the exception of consumers' co-operative societies, which in Belgium are directly under Socialist party management. In Switzerland, also, they have had a large development, being patronized by both lower-middle-class and proletarian elements. Campaigns for election to the governing boards of consumers' co-operative societies in Swiss cities are sometimes enlivened, however, by lineups between their Socialist or Communist members on the one hand and bourgeois members on the other.[25] With the exception of retail business, which, after all, is only a partial one, the Swiss Socialist party with its *Volkshaus* is almost a second home for the voter and members of his family.

---

[24] Quoted in full, *Vierter Tätigkeitsbericht d. Sekretariats d. freisinnig-demokratischen Partei d. Schweiz, Berichtsjahre 1918 u. 1919,* pp. 34–40.

[25] Cf. P. Beuttner, *Enttäuschungen in der schweizerischen Konsumgenossenschaftsbewegung,* published by the Schweizerischer Rabattverband, 1926. Through the latter, and by forming a close association, making purchases in common, and in-

It is, of course, no small task to keep the multifarious activities of a Swiss party going. In general the problem is met by division of labor and the appointment of professional secretaries. It should be remembered, also, that in one way political leaders in Switzerland are not so heavily burdened as in the United States. Their heaviest campaign, that for the election of a new National Council, is far less exacting and prolonged than our own presidential contests, although the leisure thus gained is offset to some degree by the demands made upon the time of practical politicians by federal initiative and referendum votes.

There is every reason to anticipate the future multiplication of educational, dramatic, sport, and youth movements as factors in Swiss politics. Parties of the right and left are determined to go as far as they can with such auxiliary organizations, and, in spite of their resistance, competition is likely to compel liberal parties to follow suit. If all of them develop classes, courses, summer schools, dramatic clubs, singing societies, bands, athletic societies, track teams, bicycle clubs, tourist clubs, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*, is it too much to hope for the emergence of some political genius who will invent methods for the solution of political issues not by the dull processes of the ballot box but, let us say, by interparty football games? Meanwhile one notes with a feeling of relief that the Swiss themselves are beginning to see a certain humor in the situation. Thus the genial Felix Moeschlin in his recent *Eidgenössische Glossen,*[26] "a book for federal councilors, councilors of state and national councilors, administrative councilors and cantonal councilors, municipal councilors, town councilors, and those who wish to become such," draws the following picture of what may happen in some future session of the National Council:

> For Resolution X voted the members of the Catholic and of the Social-Democratic Sport parties, and of the Independent Democratic Moving-picture party; against it members of the remaining parties, including the Independent Democratic Automobile party which at the last moment made a sudden turn. As usual the Mountain Peasant party withheld its vote. The attitude of the Social-Democratic Radio party remains incomprehensible. From its sound political instinct one expected something quite different. . . . .

---

troducing other economies, the small retail trade, which at first was hard hit by the consumers' co-operatives, has made successful headway against them. At the annual assembly of the Schweizerischer Rabattverband held at Meiringen, July 4, 1929, it was reported that there were 116 rebate unions in Switzerland to which 15,000 retail merchants, three-fourths of the total number in the country belong. All together, they paid back 15,000,000 francs as rebates to customers in 1928.

[26] Published by Eugen Rentsch, Erlenbach-Zürich, 1929.

CHAPTER V

PARTICIPATION IN SWISS ELECTIONS, POPULAR VOTES, LANDSGEMEINDEN, AND TOWN MEETINGS

POPULAR VOTES

Lord Bryce tells of meeting a Swiss peasant in a secluded Alpine valley of whom he inquired whether all the dwellers therein had not the right to attend and vote in the Landsgemeinde? To which the reply was: "*Es ist ihre Pflicht*" ("It is their duty").[1] If one judges by the figures showing participation in elections, something of the same spirit is felt by the great mass of the Swiss electorate. Even so, anxious citizens are not satisfied, and complaints regarding *Stimmfaulheit*, i.e., vote slacking, are frequently voiced.

In the general election of 1919 for the National Council, nevertheless, 80.4 per cent of voters of the country as a whole went to the polls. Three cantons registered a participation in excess of 90 per cent: Schaffhausen (91), St. Gallen (91), and Aargau (90.7). The circumstances surrounding the election of 1919 were somewhat extraordinary, however; hence these high figures. Proportional representation was being employed for the first time, and all political parties realized that decisive shifts in their legislative strength were likely to occur. Voters were also attracted somewhat by the novelty of the new system of election. Legislative issues of considerable importance were at stake, and the public mind was still disturbed because of the World War and subsequent domestic troubles in Switzerland.

In the next general election for the National Council, that of 1922, participation for the country as a whole fell to 76.4 per cent, remaining at about the same figure (76.8) in 1925, and rising slightly to 78.8 per cent in the most recent election, that of 1928. Apparently with proportional representation once in effect and its possibilities thoroughly explored, something of the ardor of 1919 evaporated. The Swiss habit of re-electing sitting members who desire it and their disinclination for hopeless candidacies and campaigns have again come to the front.

From an American point of view, however, participation of between 75 and 80 per cent seems extremely satisfactory. It is the more remarkable in that Swiss registration lists do not always conform to the facts, insufficient care being taken in some places to purge them of the names of voters who have died, moved away, or otherwise lost their qualifications. A recent study of the situation in Zürich made by Dr. A. Senti[2] reached the conclusion that from 3 to 4 per cent of error exists, so that, at best, participation could not exceed 96 or 97 per cent.

---

[1] *Modern Democracies,* II, 401 n.

When allowance is made for this error, from 15 to 21 per cent of the qualified voters of Switzerland failed to put in an appearance at the general elections of 1922, 1925, and 1928, not all of whom, however, can be accused of *Stimmfaulheit*. In spite of the grumbling which is done about vote slacking, most Swiss are inclined to take the matter philosophically, as indeed well they may, considering the far larger amount of it in other countries. No scientific study of the matter comparable to that of non-voting in Chicago[3] has been undertaken as yet. Even with due allowance for the unavoidably absent, the sick and infirm, and those whose duties make their appearance at the polls impossible, it is obvious that a considerable number remain to be accounted for. Not all the latter, however, are deemed vote slackers in Switzerland. That political mark of Cain is seldom applied by the discriminating to those few citizens who are opposed by conviction to parliamentary institutions and who refrain from voting as a mark of protest against them. Nor is condemnation visited upon the voter who finds none of the parties deserving of his suffrage, although there would seem to be enough of them in Switzerland to satisfy all but the most fastidious. A considerable number of these recalcitrant citizens —there were 10,381 such in 1925, and 8,308 in 1928—do vote after a fashion; that is, they go solemnly to the polls and deposit an unmarked ballot. With all these allowances, however, there is a small residuum of careless or lazy citizens who do not trouble to exercise the right of suffrage and who deserve, no doubt, the unflattering comments lavished upon them by Swiss 100-percenters.

Local conditions also affect the turnout at the polls. In certain cantons with only one or a small number of seats in the National Council a given party may be so strong that the result is not in doubt. Or, if there are two or more parties, each with a substantial following, agreements may be made between them which virtually decide the outcome of the election. In such cases, just as in our own formerly Solid South or in Republican Pennsylvania, large numbers of voters do not go to the polls. Thus, in Uri only 30.7 per cent of the electors cast their ballots in 1922; and in Nidwalden, 22.9 per cent in 1928.

---

[2] "Die Nichtwähler in Zürich" in *Zürcher Statistische Nachrichten*, 1926, Nr. 4.

[3] C. E. Merriam and H. F. Gosnell, *Non-Voting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924).

Cases of *stille Wahl* are not unknown, although they are not so common in Switzerland as the corresponding English practice of returning members unopposed. In the general election of 1928 there were two, however—one in Outer Appenzell, the other in Glarus. The former canton has three, the latter two, seats in the National Council; and, as the number of candidates in each equaled the number to which it was entitled, voters were not troubled to go to the polls.

On the other hand, special circumstances may bring about an unusually large participation. If, for example, a National Council election is accompanied by an election for the cantonal legislature or by a vote on some cantonal referendum, the number who appear at the polls is considerably increased, for many Swiss are more interested in local than in federal politics. In fourteen cantons it happens from time to time that elections of councilors of state coincide with those of national councilors, such conjunctures always causing a larger turnout.

The high percentages of participation characteristic of Swiss elections undoubtedly reflect the active and sustained interest in politics of the great mass of citizens. It is a growth not of a day but of many generations. Initiative and referendum votes, town meetings and Landsgemeinden do not seem to breed weariness in the Swiss elector; rather, they serve to keep his interest alive for the great triennial event, the election of a new National Council. The number of parties and the wide range of issues they present, running the whole gamut from communism to reaction, serve the same end. Back of the parties, as we have already noted, are innumerable unions, clubs, and associations of all descriptions which are often as much interested in a campaign as the parties themselves and which spur their members on to strenuous endeavor.

Not that the parties are remiss in their own efforts to get out the vote. The large number of straight tickets cast—from 82 to 87 per cent of the total—is one indication of the effectiveness of their methods.[4] Party workers plead with electors to be regular, and secure pledges from as many as possible that they will go to the polls. Although such tactics considerably increase the vote cast, they are criticized—and that often enough by the same persons who denounce vote slacking—as terrorization, exercise of undue influence, and destruction of the individual's right of self-determination.

---

[4] Cf. F. Giovanoli, *Statistik der Nationalratswahlen, 1919, 1922, 1925, und 1928*, p. 32*, for detailed figures on the foregoing point relating to the cantons of Basel City, Vaud, and Neuchâtel. In general the Communist, Socialist, and Peasant parties cast the highest proportion of straight tickets, often over 90 per cent; the Liberals, Independent Democrats, and Catholic Conservatives following with about 80 per cent in the cantons named.

Six cantons—Zürich, Schaffhausen, St. Gall, Aargau, Thurgau, and Vaud—have the *Stimmzwang*, i.e., compulsory voting laws. Penalties for electors who are absent from the polls without valid excuses are small fines of from 1 to 2 francs. In Zürich it can scarcely be said that compulsion exists, the law requiring only that voters must turn in their notification cards to polling officials on election day or send them back within two days following, failing which messengers are sent to take them up, a fee of ½ to 1 franc being assessed in the latter event. Vaud did not introduce the *Stimmzwang* until 1925, and its law penalizes only those electors who do not vote on referendum measures. Nevertheless, it is said to have increased participation at regular elections (i.e., involving candidates) as well.

It is conceded that compulsory voting laws have brought larger numbers of voters to the polls. Evidently fines of 1 or 2 francs are not sniffed at by the canny Swiss as they would be by our more extravagant Americans. Five cantons possessing the *Stimmzwang*, all of them with the exception of Zürich, were precisely those which showed the largest percentages of participation in the 1928 election, one of them, Schaffhausen, setting a new high record for Switzerland of 92.5 per cent. On the other hand, it is in these same cantons with compulsory laws that the form of electoral sabotage which consists in casting unmarked ballots is most frequently practiced. Of course, as noted above, voting blank may be a means of expressing certain definite political views or certain equally definite discontents, and to that extent be justified. On the other hand, as Dr. Giovanoli remarks, there are also in Switzerland a considerable number who deposit unmarked ballots because they resent being threatened with penalties if they do not go to the polls. Whatever the grounds for such action, the percentage of unmarked ballots in cantons with compulsory voting laws ranged in 1928 from 1.6 per cent in Thurgau to 3.8 per cent in St. Gall, whereas the average for the country as a whole was exactly 1 per cent. Considering the smallness of the foregoing percentages, and the further fact that the cantons which pursue the *Stimmzwang* policy are highest in participation, evidently many more votes are gained than lost by it. Whether any advantage to the state results let philosophers decide.

Complaints are made occasionally that authorities do not enforce the *Stimmzwang* draconically. Thus, at an important cantonal election held in Thurgau early in 1929, it is alleged that the number of unexcused absentees in certain communes exceeded 200, none of whom was fined. In some precincts the officials were so tolerant that nonvoters were not even called upon to explain their failure to appear. Apparently such laxity, which is unusual in Swiss administration, was deemed excessive, for it came in for harsh criticism at the following session of the cantonal legislature, and a motion was passed requesting the government to take action to prevent its recurrence.[5]

In comparing statistics of participation in Switzerland with corresponding figures which have caused so much political heart-searching in the United States, it must be remembered that the electorate of the former is much less extended than that of our own country. If the percentage of voters to total population be taken as one of the indexes of democracy, Switzerland, despite the fame it enjoys for devotion to this form of government, would receive a rating far below that of the United States, England, Germany, and many other self-governing states, and even below that of Soviet Russia. On the basis of the estimated resident population of the country for 1925, the percentage of registered voters was only 1 in 4.[6] For the United States as a whole, statistics showing the number of qualified voters at each election are very imperfect, and for this reason broad comparisons with Switzerland are out of the question. However, the total registration of New York State in 1928 was 4,885,363, amounting to 42.3 per cent of the estimated population for that year.[7] And some of our pivotal states have actually turned out more than 40 per cent of their population in presidential elections. In the presidential election of 1920 the vote of the state of Indiana, for example, was equal to 43.4 per cent of its population.

Of course the comparatively small percentage of voters to the population as a whole in Switzerland is due primarily to the fact that its women have not been enfranchised. Since it is necessary to take the resident population as a basis, estimates of the citizen population not being supplied by the Census Office, the large number of foreigners resident in the country acts as a secondary factor to reduce the proportion. For the most part, therefore, those who vote in Switzerland today are males who could not only qualify under the grandfather clauses once current in our southern states but could also prove lines of voting forbears long antedating 1867. Going to the polls is for them more than a duty: it is an ancestral tradition. No wonder they roll up high percentages of participation. Doubtless also, as in our own case, if women were given the suffrage a slump would follow, not that this consideration should be deemed to excuse ourselves or to depreciate such credit as the men of Switzerland deserve for bearing the burden of the ballot manfully.

---

[5] Cf. the *Berner Bund* of April 3, 1929.

[6] Exactly 25.3 per cent. Dr. Giovanoli refrains from making such comparisons on the ground that, while the number of registered voters is accurately determined, the estimates from year to year of resident population, which are the only figures of the sort supplied by the Swiss Census Office, are, after all, only estimates. They would seem sufficiently accurate, however, for the use made of them above.

[7] *World Almanac, 1929,* pp. 436, 887. Despite this broader electorate, the presidential vote of New York in 1928 (4,405,626) amounted to 92.2 per cent of the total number registered, which is very nearly as high as the best record of Switzerland (Schaffhausen, 92.5 per cent) for the same year.

And, of course, the burden of the ballot includes in their case not only the choice of a National Council triennially but federal initiative and referendum votes as well, to say nothing of cantonal and local elections, cantonal and local initiative and referendum votes, attendance at town meetings, and, in five cantons, at Landsgemeinden. Stated summarily, these duties may seem crushing; nevertheless, ballots are much shorter and simpler than those with which many Americans have to deal, also the number of initiative and referendum measures submitted in Switzerland is not so large as in some of our western states. During the ten-year period 1918–27, for example, only twenty-nine federal proposals were voted upon by the Swiss people, of which eleven were ordinary and twelve initiated amendments to the constitution, the remaining six being ordinary laws brought before the electorate by referendum petition. Owing to the fact that occasionally two or even three of these proposals were presented to the people at the same time, the twenty-nine were disposed of in twenty-one voting days, surely not an excessive tax upon a decade of the citizens' time.

It has been customary to criticize the workings of the initiative and referendum in Switzerland upon the basis of percentages of participation to the total number of registered voters in the country. While figures regarding the latter are always obtainable for each initiative and referendum date since 1879,[8] they are subject to a certain small deduction for reasons stated above.[9] It seems much fairer to follow the practice current in the United States, where, for lack of registration figures, initiative and referendum participation is computed on the basis of the vote in presidential or important state-wide elections. For Switzerland the best corresponding basis is the vote polled in elections for the National Council, the latter being the only occasions, apart from federal initiative and referendum days, when the electorate of the whole country goes to the polls. When the percentages for the four most recent general elections are averaged (1919, 80.4; 1922, 76.4; 1925, 76.8; and 1928, 78.8 per cent), the result, which may fairly be taken to be the normal performance of the Swiss electorate in the most important elections during the last decade, is 78.1 per cent.

---

[8] *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 36. Jahrgang, 1927,* p. 344.

[9] See p. 108, *supra.*

Assuming the latter figure as a basis, the average turnout of Swiss voters on the twenty-nine initiative and referendum measures from 1918–27 was nearly three-fourths (exactly 72.2 per cent) of the number presenting themselves at National Council elections during the same period. By classes of measures the ratios are as follows: ordinary constitutional amendments which are submitted without petition, 68.2 per cent; initiated constitutional amendments which require petitions signed by 50,000 qualified electors, 72.3 per cent; ordinary laws submitted to referendum upon petition by 30,000 qualified voters, 79.5 per cent. The latter figure, although fully in line with earlier Swiss experience, is explained in part by the fact that during the decade 1918–27 several of the ordinary laws submitted to referendum were of unusual importance.[10]

On the whole, therefore, participation in Swiss initiative and referendum votes is more than satisfactorily high, judged by the best standard of the country, that set in general elections for the National Council. Of course, cases occur in which small percentages of the registered voters appear at the polls, mostly explainable on the ground that the measures submitted are perfunctory or of relatively small importance (e.g., the constitutional amendment of August 10, 1919, participation only 29.7 per cent, involving transition measures made necessary by the adoption of proportional representation a year earlier; and the two amendments, one on aerial navigation [34.9 per cent], the other on automobile and motorcycle traffic [35.6 per cent], both accepted, May 22, 1921). There is reason to believe also that participation falls off at times because of the conviction on the part of many voters that a proposal is certain either to be defeated or to be successful. In this connection it is interesting to note that the percentage of participation on the proportional representation initiative in 1918 (47.9 per cent), when nearly everyone expected it to succeed and when

[10] First among these was the proposed amendment to the Factory Act, voted down February 17, 1924, bringing out a participation (76 per cent) which fell only a little short of that in a National Council election. Two others of the six deal with labor, and one, the Zone Agreement with France, overwhelmingly voted down, February 18, 1923, was the first, and to date only, case under the initiated constitutional amendment of January 30, 1921, subjecting more important treaties to referendum upon the same basis as ordinary laws.

in fact it did succeed, was markedly less than on the two earlier occasions (1900, 55.3 per cent; 1910, 61.4 per cent), on the second of which, at least, the outcome was more doubtful.

Given a major issue, however, participation may equal and even exceed that in a National Council election. The constitutional amendment providing for the entry of Switzerland into the League of Nations brought out 76.5 per cent of the registered voters on May 16, 1920.[11] An ordinary legislative measure modifying the factory act, submitted to referendum, February 17, 1924, registered a participation of 76 per cent. Highest of all records, however, was that made on the initiative proposal for a capital tax levy which was overwhelmingly voted down, December 3, 1922, 85.3 per cent of the electorate going to the polls. On this occasion the participation was actually 9.2 per cent in excess of the average for National Council elections from 1919 to 1928, inclusive. In earlier decades also some exceptional records were made, as, for example, when the law to extend federal control over primary schools was voted down, November 26, 1882, 77.2 per cent participating; and again on February 20, 1898, when the law nationalizing the railroads of the country was accepted, 77.6 per cent participating.

TABLE V

NUMBER OF INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM VOTES IN SWITZERLAND AND AVERAGE PARTICIPATION THEREIN BY DECADES, 1878–1927

DECADES	NUMBER OF MEASURES SUBMITTED				AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION			
	Ordinary Constitutional Amendments	Initiative Constitutional Amendments	Ordinary Laws	Total	Ordinary Constitutional Amendments	Initiative Constitutional Amendments	Ordinary Laws	Average for All
1878–87...	5	0*	8	13	53.6	....	60.1	57.6
1888–97...	8	3	9	20	48.6	58.6	59.0	54.8
1898–1907.	5	3	6	14	46.3	53.9	64.9	55.9
1908–17...	6	2	1	9	42.1	54.2	63.0	47.1
1918–27...	11	12	6	29	53.3	56.5	62.1	56.4

* Use of the initiative for partial revision did not begin until 1893.

Comparison of initiative and referendum votes in Switzerland during the last five decades, as presented in Table V, shows a consistently high level of participation.

The only divergence of any importance shown by Table V occurred in the decade 1908–17, when, during the four years of the World War, an effort was made to use the initiative and referendum as little as possible, and then only on measures of minor importance which would not unduly excite the passions of the electorate. For the same reason the number and importance of measures submitted during the following decade increased markedly. In all cases, it will be observed, participation was lowest on ordinary constitutional amendments which, passed originally by both houses, go before the electorate without demand by popular petition. Since such measures have found favor with the legislature, there is a certain presumption that they have the support of a considerable part of the electorate; sometimes, also, they are, although constitutional formally, of no unusual practical importance —hence the comparatively small proportion of voters they attract.

---

[11] For details see *American Political Science Review*, XIV (August, 1920), 477.

Not always can it be said, however, that part of the electorate is apathetic in such cases, or when ordinary laws passed by the two chambers have been brought before the people by referendum petition. There is a distinct political type in Switzerland, the "referendum citizen" *(Referendumsbürger)*, otherwise known as the "no-sayer" *(Neinsager)*, who takes the keenest delight in proving himself master over the legislature. Estimates of the number of such voters run to the absurdly high figure of 200,000, but in any event there are enough of them to cause the destruction of many promising government measures and to drive prominent statesmen at times to despair of their country. Curiously enough, after one of their victories neither the "no-sayers" nor any fellow-citizens who may have voted with them for definite reasons have any desire whatsoever that the cabinet should resign or the chambers be dissolved—a fact which, as Dr. Giovanoli observes,[12] shows how far the Swiss government diverges from the ordinary parliamentary type. In spite of the abuse lavished upon them at times, the chronic obstructionists who turn out against all referendum measures merely exhibit in heightened degree a trait widely diffused among their countrymen—that of extreme caution. One does not travel far in Switzerland without observing that all vehicles are supplied with excellent brakes. They are absolutely necessary, of course, on mountain roads, but they are found quite as commonly in the level reaches of the plateau region. And the extreme caution they betoken is as characteristic of Swiss political activities as of their highway traffic. Considering this trait, it is remarkable that they did not write our sacred device—separation of powers, checks and balances—into their constitutions. Without it, however, they feel able to safeguard themselves at all times by the referendum, using it as a brake on political vehicles, federal, cantonal, and local.

[12] *Op. cit.*, p. 6.*

Initiative amendments bring out a larger participation than those ordinary amendments which have passed the federal houses, presumably because they usually involve much more contentious subjects. True, the former must be proposed by petitions bearing the signatures of 50,000 voters, but the latter number is less than 5 per cent of the present electorate; hence, a quite small but active minority is in a position to use this device. In such manner, for example, the capital tax levy of 1922, which brought out the high record participation of 85.3 per cent, was submitted to the Swiss people.

On the average, however, ordinary legislative measures brought before the electorate by referendum petitions arouse more interest than initiated amendments. It is against them that the "no-sayers" turn out to the last man. Often, indeed, such measures are of more importance than the run of constitutional amendments. Certainly this was true of the railroad nationalization law of 1898 and the military law of 1907. More recently, as was noted above, important legislative measures dealing with the labor question have brought out large masses of voters.

With the single exception of the World War decade (1908–17), the average participation for all classes of measures referred to the Swiss people as a whole was in excess of two-thirds of that registered in recent National Council elections. During the most recent decade (1918–27), the average was higher than at any time since 1887, satisfactory evidence it would seem—particularly when the large number of measures disposed of is taken into consideration—that voters of the present generation are not growing weary in the use of the tools of direct legislation. Conversation with leaders of thought in all classes confirms the foregoing conclusion: among them it is an oft-repeated remark that, owing to the initiative and referendum, one does not have to form a party and elect men to office in order to carry on political activities *(Politik treiben)* in Switzerland.

Unquestionably also, the federal initiative and referendum have a profoundly potent unifying and educating influence upon the Swiss. Both institutions are old enough now and are resorted to so frequently that they form a familiar part of the life of the people. As events in which the whole electorate of the country participates simultaneously, they possess a certain attractiveness not found even in a general election for the National Council. While the latter is run off on a single day, it is now, under proportional representation, an affair in which, as an electoral district, each canton forms a separate compartment, so to speak. To that extent it has a certain states' rights rather than national character. In any event, the campaign preceding the election of a new National Council possesses little indeed of the intensity and dramatic possibilities of a presidential election in the United States. It is impossible to put as much fervor into the somewhat diffuse election of one hundred and ninety-eight gentlemen who are to make laws at Bern as into the highly concentrated choice of one man out of two who is to be charged with the enormously important duties of the executive at Washington.

Now, an initiative or referendum vote in Switzerland does have precisely this quality of concentration. It is a matter of "yes" or "no" to a single question, often of the highest importance, capable of dramatic interpretation, and preceded by vigorous campaigning. Each voter, from the richest banker in the city to the poorest shepherd in the hills, participates equally; the eyes of all are fastened for a moment on the state. Thus, the initiative and referendum fuses the people into a single whole for the expression of something like that *volonté générale* of which Rousseau dreamed, partly because he was a philosopher but partly also because he was a Swiss. Since federal initiative and referendum campaigns are nation-wide affairs, they aid, as a rule, in overcoming local differences and antagonisms—a result of the utmost importance in a country of such great ethnographic, linguistic, geographical, and religious variety. They cultivate national thinking, national sentiment, to such a degree, indeed, that extreme states' rights advocates view them with alarm. Thus, Gonzague de Reynold, writing of the effects of direct democracy since 1874, asserts that "without violent shocks, by legal means, the federal state is being demolished, tile by tile, stone after stone."[13] The criticism is distinctly one-sided, however, for centralization is pretty much the order of the day even in countries with purely representative institutions; moreover, in Switzerland the referendum has been invoked time after time by a combination of western and Catholic cantons to upset measures increasing the power of the federal government.

Further, the initiative and referendum impress upon the individual that he is not merely a subject of the state, but a citizen who must cooperate with others in the direction of state affairs. Thus they withdraw a man temporarily from the narrower concerns of private and local life and develop his higher personality, educating him to think to the extent of his powers for the good of the whole people. Of course there are disadvantages connected with the operation of the initiative and referendum, chiefly the technical difficulties which some of the questions presented involve, and to a less extent the cost in time and money, although with the economical Swiss the last named is a matter of small importance. All in all, however, the advantages of direct legislation in Switzerland enormously outweigh the disadvantages.

---

[13] *La démocratie et la Suisse* (Bern: Chandelier, 1929), p. 221.

A touch of the ludicrous is apparent in the attitude of the "no-sayers," referred to above; but behind it lurks a significant fact, namely, that the Swiss voter does feel that he is master in Switzerland. He may at times be selfish and short-sighted; if so, he knows he must pay the reckoning. At other times he may be far-sighted and unselfish, yet still doubt the consequences of his action. Thus the initiative and referendum breed a sense of responsibility, even a certain philosophic attitude among the masses of the people. Dr. Rappard, rector of the University of Geneva, illustrates the latter trait by an answer given him shortly after the referendum of 1920 by which Switzerland decided to enter the League of Nations—the only nation so far to make that momentous decision by direct popular vote. Happening to be in one of the cantons where opinion had been much divided, he asked a group of peasants at an inn what they thought of the action taken. They pondered the matter, smoking gravely the while. Finally, a graybeard, removing his pipe from his mouth, replied: "It is one of those cases, Herr Doktor, that take a hundred years to decide." Whether the issue to be dealt with by popular vote is small and temporary or, as in the case of the League of Nations, great and far-reaching in its effects, apparently there is the same willingness to meet it, and, once voted on, to give the result a fair trial until such time as it can be legally changed. Considering the invincible determination of the Swiss to rule themselves—come weal, come woe—the initiative and referendum seem made precisely for them, just as they seem to be perfectly adapted to the use of these tools of direct legislation. Certainly, no factors are more potent in cultivating that devotion to democracy which is first among Swiss loyalties.

LANDSGEMEINDEN, POLITICAL ASPECTS

Among the democratic institutions of Switzerland Landsgemeinden attract a measure of attention approaching that given the initiative and referendum. Yet they are far inferior to the latter in practical importance. Federal initiative and referendum measures are voted on by the entire national electorate; in addition many cantonal and local questions are dealt with by the methods of direct legislation. The populations of the five pure democratic cantons, now that Uri has turned to representative government, is less than 4 per cent of that of the country as a whole. Further, it is seldom that any question of more than purely local importance comes before one of the Landsgemeinden. In their antiquity and ceremonial glamor, however, these annual assemblies of the people to make their own laws exercise a strong fascination throughout Switzerland. They are reported fully in the press of the country; "patriotic pilgrimages" of citizens from other cantons often attend them. Although Landsgemeinden are wholly Teutonic in origin, location and composition, it is a curious fact that nowhere are they regarded with more admiration than in the Romance sections of the west and south. Primarily this sentiment is due to a theoretic enthusiasm for pure democracy, which apparently is not in the least diminished by the fact that French and Italian cantons possess representative institutions only. There is also a sort of spiritual kinship between Romance and Landsgemeinde cantons, since both are strongly "federalist" in the Swiss sense, i.e., opposed to centralization of power in the hands of the government at Bern.

Ceremonial and sentimental values inhering in Landsgemeinden are so striking that they will be discussed at length elsewhere.[14] From a political viewpoint, however, popular law-making assemblies suffer from various defects. All of these came to a head in Uri at the Landsgemeinde of 1928, with the result that the people themselves, in spite of a tradition going back to the year 1233, voted to abolish the institution. This case of political suicide aroused an enormous interest throughout the whole of Switzerland. While none of the other five remaining Landsgemeinde cantons have followed Uri's example, the same conditions prevail in most of them, for which reason the arguments, pro and con, brought forward in the canton of Wilhelm Tell are of more than usual significance.

Like most of the inner cantons, Uri is strongly Catholic by confession and conservative politically. Nevertheless, the Independent Democrats succeeded in capturing one of the canton's two seats in the Council of States at the Landsgemeinde of 1925. Overcoming their astonishment at this unexpected defeat, the Catholic Conservative party bent every energy to secure a reversal of the popular decision a year later. Unsuccessful in 1926, they redoubled their efforts during the following year. It is alleged that not only lay politicians, but clerical gentlemen as well, applied their utmost influence, amounting in some cases to threats and compulsion, in dealing with electoral sheep who had wandered from the fold, and to their more pious wives and other female relatives, if males proved lacking in docility. Further, the party used a campaign fund which was apparently much larger than customary, to hire every available means of conveyance for the purpose of bringing its voters to the Landsgemeinde. Of course, in other countries the latter practice is not regarded as involving any considerable degree of moral turpitude; it scarcely arouses notice in Philadelphia or even in Swarthmore elections. While not unknown in Switzerland, it is much less common and is considered rather off-side, especially when employed on the scale prevailing at Altdorf in 1927. One wonders, however, why the Independent Democrats, instead of merely protesting virtuously against the Catholic Conservative monopoly of free busses for their voters, did not import a few taxicabs from Luzern for their own use.

---

[14] See chap. xii.

Worse far, than the preceding form of political malpractice, were the small contributions of from 2 to 4 francs alleged to have been made by kindly but practical politicians to many poorer voters as compensation for traveling expenses. At the Landsgemeinde of 1927 clerical party workers were accused of paying "premiums" of from 10 to 20 francs to supporters coming from distant parts of the canton. Contributions of this type, colloquially known as "*Rückvergütungen,*" are heard of from time to time in Switzerland, but they are harshly condemned by large numbers of political Puritans who insist on regarding them as bribes rather than as honorable indemnities. Whatever moral judgment one may hold as to the practices aforesaid, certain it is that they, coupled with the knowledge that a fight to the finish was impending, brought out a record attendance of nearly 4,000 at the Landsgemeinde of 1927. And when the fight was ended—that is, after thirty-four orators had been heard on the merits of the two candidates—it was discovered that the Catholic Conservatives had regained their lost seat in the Council of States, however, by a rather scant majority estimated at from 300 to 400 votes only.

It is fairly evident that the party struggle in the Landsgemeinde of 1927 was the occasion rather than the cause of the revolution which followed. What it did was to reveal local antagonisms that had long been forming, and also certain defects in the methods of pure democracy when confronted with such antagonisms. In any event, criticism of the Landsgemeinde immediately became rife; and a petition for its abolition, to be acted upon by the people themselves the following year, soon received 1,785 signatures.

Of all the arguments raised against the ancient institution, the most effective was that based on open voting by show of hands. In the presence of priests, politicians, employers, and other persons of influence many citizens, it was said, expressed their fears rather than their convictions at the Landsgemeinde. Less convincing, but not the less vehemently urged, was the argument that voters residing at a distance from Altdorf found it too difficult or too expensive to attend the annual assembly which is always held in the meadow of Bötzlingen an der Gand three miles distant from that city. Inhabitants of the upper valley of the Urseren complained particularly on this score; moreover, having become a part of the canton *de fraiche date*, that is, only in 1410, and having a Landsgemeinde of their own for local affairs, they are said to feel a certain aloofness from, if not antagonism toward, their lowland fellow-citizens. In these days of railways, motor busses, and improved roads it is difficult to attach much importance to the argument that distance is a valid excuse for absence from the Landsgemeinde, especially considering the number who attended during earlier centuries when highways were little more than rocky mule paths. Apparently, popular sovereignty was more appreciated when it required effort and hardship on the part of those who maintained it. Nor need much weight be attached to the assertions that one could never tell what Landsgemeinden would do and that they were too susceptible to gifted orators. In the main they have proved themselves decidedly hard-headed; moreover, representative legislatures often prove unpredictable and are susceptible to worse influences than oratory.

On the other hand, there was much force in the contention that workers of certain classes who are increasing rapidly in number were virtually disfranchised under the Landsgemeinde because of their inability to leave their employment for a day in order to attend it. Back of the political discussion that went on in Uri between 1927 and 1928 it was obvious that sweeping economic changes were at work. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the canton was a little world in itself, almost untouched by the greater world outside, its population highly uniform in origin, confession, and economic condition, at least 80 per cent of it being engaged in agriculture and cattle-raising. Then came the improvement of the Gotthard pass (1820–30), the construction of the famous Axenstrasse (1860–70), the building of roads over the Oberalp, the Furka, and the Klausen (1893–98), and, most important of all, the Gotthard railway (1872–82), through all of which commerce flowed into the little land. Following commerce came industry, promoted by the powerful hydro-electric plants developing current from mountain torrents. At present not more than a third of the population is engaged in farming. Commerce and industry employ 39 per cent, transportation 15 per cent, among the latter being many government railway employees who are members of the Socialist party. Particularly on behalf of the latter, complaint was raised that the Landsgemeinde system virtually made it impossible for them to exercise their influence in cantonal politics.

As a remedy for all the shortcomings alleged above, the secret ballot with a polling place in each commune was proposed, popular control over the elective legislature to be secured by obligatory referendum. When one considers their defeat in 1927, it is not strange that the Independent Democrats of Uri threw their strength against the Landsgemeinde. It is somewhat remarkable, however, that the Catholic Conservatives did not uphold it, their party diet leaving voters free to decide the question for themselves *(Stimmfreigabe)*. Nevertheless, the delegate assembly of the cantonal Peasants' Union, which had always been associated closely with that party, declared in favor of abolition. Socialists generally have consistently taken the position that the Landsgemeinde is a moldy medieval relic, utterly out of place in a world of printing-presses, railroads, telegraphs, and factories. Friends of the institution appealed to the historic memories of more than six centuries, to the beauty of its ceremonial, to its fame abroad, to the nobility of the spectacle afforded by a free people meeting once a year to govern themselves directly. In vain, at the Landsgemeinde of Sunday, May 6, 1928, to which a large crowd had been attracted by the likelihood that it would be the last, after routine business had been transacted, after the Catholic Conservative victor of the preceding year had been re-elected to the Council of States, and after a short debate on the question at issue, it was put to a show of hands; with the result that a large majority of the citizens of Uri, both conservatives on the right and radicals on the left of the ring, acquiesced in their own abdication. But among the former there was a solid block, the mountain peasants of the Schächental, who stood like a stone wall for the old traditions.

Henceforth electors of Uri will cast their votes in secret, undisturbed by the scrutiny of priests, politicians, employers, and neighbors generally. It is too early to state what shifts of party strength will take place in consequence of the change made in 1928. Certainly the Catholic Conservatives would have opposed it more strenuously had they expected to be losers thereby; certainly, also, the Independent Democrats favored it because they hoped to gain votes in secret that they could not get in the open. One party or the other is bound to be disappointed; perhaps both, if no change in their relative strength follows.

In spite of the stress laid upon the argument that citizens living at a distance found it difficult to attend the Landsgemeinde, it remains to be proved that larger numbers will come to the polling places which are to be set up in each commune. Actual counts of those present at Landsgemeinden were not made in the past except under unusual circumstances. Nevertheless, estimates of average attendance, which, no doubt, possess a fair degree of accuracy, were published in 1904 as follows: Obwalden, 25–38 per cent; Uri, 36 per cent; Glarus, 48 per cent; Appenzell-Exterior, 63–79 per cent; Appenzell-Interior, 77 per cent; Nidwalden, 79 per cent.[15] Roughly speaking, the higher percentages were registered in the smaller cantons, and to that extent the argument that distance kept voters away is supported.[16] It is further true that average participation in Landsgemeinden falls below that of most cantons in National Council elections. As against the latter point, however, it should be noted that none of the pure democratic cantons rank at the top of the list in federal elections. Notoriously their people have a passion for local politics; moreover, in most of them one national party dominates to such an extent that many voters take little interest in federal elections. The people of Nidwalden and Appenzell-Interior, for example, turn out in much larger numbers at Landsgemeinden than for the choice of representatives at Bern; in Obwalden, Uri, and Appenzell-Exterior participation in the two is about the same; only in Glarus is there a marked preference for the federal ballot box. If Uri, therefore, continues as in the past, the number of votes cast for cantonal legislators may be no larger than the number who used formerly to congregate at Bötzlingen to legislate for themselves. Even if it were smaller, one might argue that, being more sincere because of the secret ballot, it was a truer expression of the popular will. Theoretically, perhaps, participation at elections should be larger, for under the new system no voter will have far to go to reach his polling place, nor will it take him much time to mark his ticket and poke it into the ballot box. But the process will not be nearly so exciting or so picturesque or so neighborly as the assemblage of a whole countryside in a Landsgemeinde.

Hitherto, the average attendance only at Landsgemeinden has been taken into account. It is, however, quite as true of them as of elections that extraordinary occasions bring out extraordinarily large numbers of participants. On many notable occasions in Swiss history Landsgemeinden have brought together virtually the entire male manhood of a canton, and, as spectators, no small proportion of its women and children as well. Under normal circumstances an attendance at Altdorf of 3,000 was considered quite creditable; but the last two assemblies, held at fever heat in 1927 and 1928, witnessed record crowds, estimated at nearly 4,000. On the second of these occasions an actual count of voters, made to decide the election to a seat in the Council of States, ran to 3,796. As the total registration of the canton for 1928 was 5,931, the latter figure represents a participation at the Landsgemeinde of 64 per cent, or much in excess of that at the ballot-box election held the same year for the canton's one representative in the National Council, for which only 2,751 voters, or 46.4 per cent, turned out.

---

[15] H. Ryffel, *Die schweizerischen Landsgemeinden* (Zürich, 1904).

[16] The areas of the Landsgemeinde cantons in square kilometers are as follows: Obwalden, 492.9; Uri, 1,074.4; Glarus, 684.5; Appenzell-Exterior, 242.7; Appenzell-Interior, 172.6; Nidwalden, 274.8.

The Nidwalden Landsgemeinde held at Wil near Stans in 1928 also witnessed a large attendance. Here the attraction was a proposed law worked out by hotel keepers and other sinful persons to permit dancing on three Sundays during the year. It was, of course, strenuously opposed by the priesthood, the pious, and the aged generally. Debate was opened by a Boniface whose references, deferential but firm, to the clergy, evoked noisy applause. A young priest whose lineaments bespoke his blood-relationship to the peasantry before him, begged them to defend the idyllic peace of their native land and to preserve the sanctity of the Lord's day in order to safeguard the morals of the people. A cautious and industrious peasant inquired: "If the proposed law passes, who will milk the cows on Sunday?" But the speech of the day was made by a country chaplain widely known for his works of mercy, especially among soldiers during the war. "What you behold here," he said, "is the old fight between materialism and idealism. For a few dollars the peace of the countryside and the bonds of family life are to be destroyed. Go and see for yourselves how people behave on Sundays in the cities. Would you like that sort of thing in your own midst? It shall not be said of you, people of Nidwalden, that for a handful of money you sold your Sunday."

Other speeches followed, some by simple peasants who on such occasions speak with astounding force and readiness, utterly unself-conscious. Oratorically the opponents of Sunday dancing had much the better of it; but when the vote was taken, it was impossible for the tellers, experienced as they are in such matters, to determine which side had won. A second show of hands seemed to indicate the defeat of the measure; but so closely divided was the assembly that the Landamman intervened with the order: "Those who are for the law will pass out on the road to Moulin; those who are against it in on the road to Stans." A half-hour elapsed before the *huissiers* counted the two processions. Finally the trumpet used in the Battle of Sempach was sounded; at this signal the citizens returned to the inclosure, and the result was announced—1,136 for and 1,109 against. Arithmetic is ever so much duller than life; but 2,245, the total vote on this occasion, represents 60.2 per cent of the 3,728 qualified electors of the canton, of whom only 852, or 22.9 per cent, cast their ballots in the National Council election held in the course of the same year.

From the point of view of an outsider, it is impossible to chronicle the disappearance of the Landsgemeinde of Uri, always the most picturesque of Swiss popular assemblies, without a lively feeling of regret, nor without the hope—a sentimental one, perhaps—that the five remaining pure democratic cantons will hold fast to their ancient institutions. Insiders naturally take a somewhat different view of the matter. For them there is none of the spectator's rapture over an ancient, colorful, vivid dramatization of the democratic idea, which once seen can never be forgotten. They regard themselves not at all as actors in a thrilling drama but as simple citizens engaged in transacting routine public business, electing administrative officials and judges, voting taxes they will have to pay or laws they will have to obey, and doing all these things in accordance with a certain traditional form. If this form appears burdensome to them or subject to perversion by undue influence, they will—all considerations of sentiment, tradition, or picturesqueness to the contrary, notwithstanding—exercise "the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government . . . . organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

TOWN MEETINGS

Owing to their partly sovereign character, their antiquity and gorgeous ceremonial, the Landsgemeinden have received a somewhat excessive amount of attention both from foreigners and from the Swiss themselves. On the other hand, the town meetings which are held at least annually in smaller communes throughout the country have been pretty generally neglected, perhaps because of their subordinate character and the rather humdrum nature of the business they transact. Yet the town meetings are as ancient and as directly democratic as the

Landsgemeinden; moreover, they involve the attendance and political activity of a much larger number of people in the aggregate.

With growing populations the greater cities of Switzerland have been compelled to go over to representative government, tempered in their case, however, by frequent use of the initiative and referendum. In smaller communes—and that means the overwhelming majority of the total of 3,003 in the country—the town-meeting system still prevails. As constitutionally the regulation of local government is a cantonal matter, the line between the two systems is drawn at various points in different parts of the country; thus in Vaud communes of over 800, and in Ticino of over 3,000, inhabitants may provide themselves with municipal councils. In point of time the latter system is of quite recent origin. Not until 1895, for example, did the legislation of Ticino provide for it, since which date six towns only (Lugano, Bellinzona, Locarno, Chiasso, Mendrisio, and Biasca) have accepted the council system, leaving 255 communes, with about 75 per cent of the population of the canton, still under pure democratic government locally.

As a rule, town meetings are held regularly once a year, special meetings being called only when some unusual occurrence makes them necessary. In Bern and neighboring cantons the customary time is late in December, probably because of the fiscal nature of much of the business to be transacted. Owing to the inclemency of the weather at that season, the largest hall available at the *Gemeindehaus* or the village inn is used for the assembly. The Ticinese *Regolamento*, however, provides for three town meetings annually, the first two, held between January and May, being devoted to communal expenditures, while the third in December passes upon the budget for the ensuing year. At all such meetings, regular or special, the mayor *(Gemeindepräsident, Maire* or *Syndic, Sindaco)* presides, the town clerk and other officials also being present to make reports and answer questions.

In all communes having town meetings, the powers of the latter are extensive, not only in matters of finance as already indicated, but of local police and fire prevention, schools, highways, lighting, and charity as well. As a consequence of the nature of their business, the proceedings of these popular assemblies are likely to be dull, involving the reading of a number of formal accounts and documents. Not infrequently, however, citizens are sharply divided on one or more matters of unusual importance, in which case discussion becomes free, lively, and general. Or it may happen that village soreheads come to the meeting determined to have it out with the city fathers, which they do to the tune of the local dialect reinforced by various homely and sometimes not overnice peasant expressions. Thus Hans Uhli, shortly after his election as *Gemeinderat*, found that the duties of the office involved listening to a diatribe by one of his richer peasant neighbors, personally hostile to him, who, among other things, shouted: "Get out, you; go plant your cabbages and give us a rest from your big-mouthed proposals and resolutions! We know better what we need than a threadbare have-nothing like you." Although the incident is fictional, it is emphatically the sort of fiction that is founded on fact.[17]

In addition to the administrative matters named above, Swiss town meetings are legislatures and, as such, must pass upon proposed ordinances. As a rule, they also elect communal officials for the ensuing year, although in some cantons where dissatisfaction arose because of open voting it has been provided that such officials must be chosen by ballot. No matter which method prevails, the usual result is the continuance in office of incumbents as long as they are willing to serve. Once in a long while, however, a lively contest involving national partisanship occurs. Thus at Worben (Canton Bern) in 1928, the local Socialists, announcing that they were dissatisfied with the two seats which they possessed in the administrative board *(Gemeinderat)*, demanded that they be given a larger share of representation. The demand seemed excessive to their conservative fellow-citizens who, appearing at the town meeting in full force, elected a new board entirely of their own way of thinking.

On such unwonted occasions as the foregoing, the attendance at a town meeting may include nearly every able-bodied male citizen. At regular meetings of ordinary character the number present is more likely to be a bare majority or even less, only the more actively interested voters turning out. Statistics are not available on the subject; but, judging from the common run of reports appearing in cantonal newspapers, a participation of two-thirds of the qualified voters is considered creditable. Textbooks on civics and exhortations by reformers always make a point of the importance of the matters decided at town meetings—as to which, in fact, they are perfectly right—ending with a fervid plea that citizens attend them regularly.

It must be remembered that in addition to municipal or resident communes *(Einwohnergemeinden)*, as they are commonly called, to which, as the most important, the preceding discussion is confined, there are other sorts of communes in various parts of Switzerland: the citizen communes *(Bürgergemeinden)*, interested chiefly in common lands, forests, and meadows; the school communes, which elect teachers, board members, and supervisors; and the church communes, which elect ministers, board members *(Kirchenvorsteherschaft)*, financial administrator *(Kirchenfondspfleger)*, delegates to the synod, and members of poor-relief committees. Citizen communes, school communes, and church communes require meetings of their members for the transaction of important matters of business just as do the municipal communes, so that those Swiss who belong to all of them and are unmoved by the German-Latin doggerel rhyme:

---

[17] H. J. Andres, *Von der Scholle aufwärts, Hans Uhlis Werdegang als Bauer und Staatsbürger* (Chur: Staatsbürger, 1926), p. 30.

Wer dient der Gemeinde
Et similibus horum,
Der hat Undank
In fine laborum,[18]

must give an appreciable amount of time and thought to local affairs.

Swiss writers who reside in German-speaking cantons are somewhat inclined to vaunt the superior degree of local independence possessed by their communes as compared with those of Romance sections of the country.

> The former have preserved the memory of ancient Germanic self-sufficiency and regard themselves in a sense as smaller states which not infrequently stand in a certain opposition to the collective state; the latter derive all their rights from the state and regard themselves simply as political subdivisions of the canton.[19]

Observation of the workings of local self-government in Switzerland makes the statement seem rather exaggerated; at least it may be said that the communes of Romance sections take themselves, their functions, and particularly their rights with entire seriousness—witness the case of Ticino, with its three regular town meetings annually. On the other hand, it is true that local independence is pushed to an extreme degree by some of the town meetings of Eastern Switzerland. Traditionally, Graubünden, which is rather proud of itself as the birthplace of the referendum, deserves first prize for the independence, sometimes referred to as pig-headedness, of its village Hampdens. Town meetings in the 222 communes of that canton possess the widest powers of home rule; and in addition there are a number of districts

---

[18] Translated:

"Whoso serves the town
And such-like affairs,
Receives no thanks
At the end of his cares."

[19] E. Lerch, *Vaterlandskunde der Schweiz* (Zürich: Schulthess, 1919), p. 221.

(Kreise), each made up of a single mountain valley, the people of which hold local Landsgemeinden to regulate their joint interests. With so many local bodies to be considered and conciliated, *Bündner* statesmen are reported to lead a dog's life. "It is, no doubt, a fine school of independence and democracy," one of them remarked to the writer, "but, as operated by a people noted for their self-will, the system has its disadvantages. Amid so much home rule the interests of the state as a whole are not infrequently forgotten."

In spite of the purely local interest aroused by ordinary town meetings (which, by the way, are never reported in the general press as are the Landsgemeinden), their importance and significance in a broad political sense is beyond question. Looked at as pure matters of business, the sums which they spend in the aggregate are impressive. Moreover, much of the solid progress of the country is to be referred to their progressive policies and rigid economy in the carrying-out of local public works.

It is in the educational influence of town meetings, however, that the political scientist is chiefly interested. They exemplify admirably Montesquieu's oft-quoted dictum that "local assemblies of citizens constitute the strength of free nations. Municipal institutions are to liberty what primary schools are to science: they bring it within the people's reach; they teach men how to use and how to enjoy it."[20] In the United States, as is well known, the New England town meeting has had a profound influence, an influence which can be traced well across the continent in our northern tier of commonwealths. We accept with complacency such remarks as that of Lord Bryce, who refers to it as "the most perfect school of self-government in any modern country."[21] Nevertheless, the influence of the New England town meeting was sharply limited in a geographical sense. One can only speculate as to what would have been the result upon our political institutions and life if the Middle and South Atlantic colonies also had possessed the same basic institution. Superlatives applied to perfection may be questioned by the purist; it is certain, however, that the Swiss have had much more schooling in self-government, as taught in town meetings, than the Americans. They have attended the school longer, for the institution was indigenous with them and goes back to remote antiquity. Moreover, its influence was not limited geographically as in the United States, for town meetings existed not only in the German-speaking nucleus of the federation but in the more recently acquired French- and Italian-speaking cantons as well. Long before the days of the national army or of the public school, the town meeting provided a common experience which all good Swiss shared, and which, with the exception of urban dwellers, they still share. It is perhaps a better training for self-government and the development of political leaders than the Landsgemeinde, not only because it involves the participation of a much larger part of the population of the country but also because the matters with which it deals, being those of his own village, are more close and more easily comprehensible to the common man. One might say, using Swiss terms, that the town meetings are the great primary school, while the Landsgemeinden are the *Mittelschulen* of their local self-governing system. Moreover, remembering, as Professor His points out, that the whole structure of the commune had been for ages democratic,[22] it is easier to understand the forward movement of Swiss politics during the Regeneration period (1830–48), and the subsequent success of popular institutions, including the initiative and referendum, which were set up in the Swiss federal state by the constitution of 1848.

---

[20] *Democracy in America,* chap. v.

[21] *The American Commonwealth,* II, 288.

With the election of office-holders—federal, cantonal, and local, the latter including teachers and preachers in some parts of the country; with initiative and referendum measures—also federal, cantonal, and local—to be decided; with town meetings in smaller places; with many district Landsgemeinden and the five remaining sovereign Landsgemeinden, there is plenty of voting to be done by the Swiss. They do escape one burden of the ballot borne by Americans—the direct primary—since with them nominations are made by local party assemblies. On the other hand, active party members are called upon every year to elect delegates to federal, to cantonal, and sometimes even to district diets. In the aggregate there can be no doubt that these various forms of consulting the people regarding the affairs of government constitute the most effective, as they are the most constant, method of civic training for adults—perhaps one should write "for male adults." Because they are called upon so often to give their opinion on public affairs, it is almost impossible for intelligent Swiss citizens of any social class to avoid taking a considerable degree of interest in politics. The foreign observer in their midst soon grows familiar with the heightened interest displayed as soon as conversation turns to that topic.

Another marked effect of frequent elections and referendum votes is that the Swiss are little inclined to look upon the state as master; rather they regard it as an agent, a highly trained and generally reliable agent, of course, and as such worthy of all due respect, but nevertheless an agent who must act under their general orders promulgated in constitutions, federal and cantonal, and who, furthermore, is bound to recur to them frequently for fresh instructions. Now agents, no matter how highly trained and generally reliable, are likely to make mistakes, which mistakes, when made, are corrected, sometimes quite sharply, by referendum vote. Of course, in any given case the agent may have been right and the electors wrong; nevertheless, the will of the latter prevails and acquiescence is general. The most curious feature about such transactions is that, having annulled a legislative act, the voters show no desire whatever to punish the legislator; obviously, they feel that it is a matter simply of correcting a servant for a minor error, not one of disciplining or getting rid of a dangerous master. Back of this attitude is the free human view of the state, similar to that of the ancient Greeks, which is taken by the Swiss. To an unusual degree they are exempt from the inclination to regard it as in any way sacrosanct, omniscient, or omnipotent. How could they look upon, as divine, an institution of which their common mortality is so large and influential a part?

---

[22] *Geschichte des neuern Schweizerischen Staatsrechts* (Basel: Helbing u. Lichtenhahn, 1929), zweiter Band, S. 674.

In other ways beside elections the Swiss government contributes, directly and indirectly, to the civic training of the people—through the schools from the primary grade to the university; through the army system; through social insurance; through the regulation of labor and of business; through numerous business undertakings directly conducted by the communal, cantonal, and central governments, culminating since 1898 in the great federal railway system, uniform in equipment and methods in every part of the country. In all its activities, whether primarily economic or primarily political in character, honest and efficient administration is the rule. Exceptions are rare, although one does hear of sporadic cases of bootlegging in absinth, the one prohibited liquor, and of cases, a little too frequent to be called sporadic, of tax-dodging. Perhaps the most valuable single lesson taught by the Swiss government to the Swiss people is that whatever is enacted into law will be honestly administered. The absence of political corruption is a tremendous moral influence, although one inclines to the view that it is a consequence of the honesty of the people as a whole, not in any sense a superior ethical code developed first by high and mighty officials, then imitated by lowly and humble citizens.

CHAPTER VI

GOVERNMENT SERVICE, CIVIL AND MILITARY

THE SWISS CIVIL SERVICE

Like other modern states, Switzerland has witnessed an enormous expansion of its administrative service. The founding-fathers of 1848 were extremely economical; moreover, they feared cantonal jealousy in case the new federal government started out with too large a staff of employees. Incidentally, the salaries paid the latter were so modest as to seem almost miserly. Similar conditions existed at that time in each of the cantons. During the ensuing quarter-century considerable expansion took place, accelerated markedly in the federal sphere as a result of the constitutional revision of 1874. Meanwhile, new services and improvements of existing services were being demanded of cantonal and local administrations and granted from time to time.

As early as the sixties of the last century a strong tendency developed among the lower middle class of Swiss citizens in favor of public ownership. At that time, and indeed during the two following decades, socialistic theory was too weak to play any part in emphasizing this tendency. On the contrary, the latter owed its strength partly to the apprehension felt by small business men of the competition which they might expect from large-scale enterprises. Another and even stronger factor, more political than economic in character, was involved. Elsewhere in this volume[1] attention has been called to a trait encountered in every walk of Swiss life, namely, intense opposition to one-man power. Closely related to it is the fear that big business might gain too great influence in the state, thus undermining its democratic character. To prevent anything of the sort, communes and cantons were urged to purchase and operate monopolistic enterprises such as water works, gas and electric plants, and street railways. Partly, also, to forestall establishment of big capitalistic undertakings, a large measure of popular support was early thrown behind co-operative projects of every sort—consumers' co-operatives, building and loan societies, farmers' co-operatives, and the like. But, of course, the most important single step toward the increase of the civil service was taken when the principal railway lines of the country were nationalized during the first decade of the present century. With the advent of a strong Socialist party organization at about the same time, the public-ownership movement was given a new impetus; nevertheless, the fact remains that it had already scored many notable successes before Socialist propaganda entered the field.

---

[1] Cf. chaps. i and ii.

As a result of the various developments sketched above, Swiss public employees have multiplied to such an extent that they must be taken into consideration nowadays in deciding every party issue. Between 1875 and 1925, while the population of the country as a whole increased only 43.1 per cent, the office-holding class increased 811 per cent. In 1875 the total number of public officials employed in the various branches of the central administration at Bern was 807; in 1925 it was 7,358. The largest services maintained by the federal government in 1848—posts and telegraphs—employed less than 2,500 men; by 1914 their personnel had grown to over 20,000, at which figure approximately it still remains. When nationalization began (1900) the average mean number of railroad employees was about 30,000, reaching a maximum of 53,337 in 1920. Since that year it has been cut down by some 7,000 in spite of increasing business, both freight and passenger, the latter development being all the more remarkable when one takes into account the rapidly growing competition by motor cars and trucks. From 1900 to 1920 the number of persons employed in public-transportation enterprises of all sorts (i.e., cantonal and local as well as national) increased from 45,091 to 76,229; in general public administration, from 13,502 to 26,019. Taken together, these two groups make up more than 5 per cent of the total number of persons gainfully employed in Switzerland. Unfortunately, the census figures do not distinguish between publicly and privately owned gas, power, and water plants, which, however, as a matter of common knowledge, are largely under cantonal and communal control. Between 1900 and 1920 the number of persons employed by such plants more than doubled, increasing from 6,086 in the former to 12,557 in the latter year.[2] All together the total number of public officials and civil servants—federal, cantonal, and local—is estimated by a contemporary writer at 153,000, or 1 in every 26 of the population.[3] Relatively, Switzerland has more than a third again as many government employees as the United States, the difference being attributable largely to the nationalization of railways and the progress of the public-ownership policy generally in the former country.

---

[2] School teachers, who increased in number from 20,000 to 30,000 between 1900 and 1920, are nearly all public employees but have not been included in the foregoing summaries because of the professional character of their work.

[3] E. Dürr, "Das Problem des Funktionarismus," in the *Bulletin, Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft,* Heft 6 (November–December, 1928), S. 235.

Large as is the mass of public employees in Switzerland, it has come to exert a political influence greater, out of all proportion, than its relation to the total population would lead one to anticipate. In part this development may be ascribed to the generally high average of intelligence among its members; in part, also, to the fact that, being constantly engaged in public business, they know more about it than the average private citizen. Most of all, however, it must be attributed to the numerous organizations they have formed on trade-union lines, which are estimated at present to include some 90 per cent of the civil servants of the country. All the unions formed by employees of the central government were linked together finally in a strong *Föderativverband.* These organizations possess an aggressive press and are served by numerous paid professional secretaries. The latter, it is often asserted, are unduly active on behalf of their clients; but such criticisms need not be taken too seriously, for there is scarcely an occupational group in the country either of employees or of employers which does not follow the same practice to the full extent of the means at its disposal.

According to Article 56 of the federal constitution, organizations formed by public employees may not include the right to strike in their statutes or by-laws. On the one occasion when strong pressure was brought to bear upon them to stop work, namely, during the attempted general strike of 1918, the overwhelming majority of civil servants stood firmly in support of the government.[4] The latter has always shown itself ready to recognize unions of public employees and, whenever possible, to grant their requests, as, for example, in the payment of "high-prices-increments," i.e., additions to salaries to keep pace with increasing commodity costs.

However, the most striking illustration of the political influence exerted by public servants in Switzerland is supplied by the relatively high proportion of representatives of this class found in legislative bodies. In the National Council itself, as stated earlier,[5] they rank second only to lawyers, holding 22.2 per cent of the seats, whereas their proportion to the population of the country as a whole is slightly under 4 per cent. No doubt the former percentage would be even larger were not federal officials constitutionally ineligible for membership in the National Council. Certain cantonal constitutions or laws also forbid the election of public employees to their legislatures or municipal councils, or limit the number who may be elected. While there are wide differences from canton to canton in the proportion of members of the local legislature who at the same time hold administrative posts, nevertheless, in the absence of legal restrictions it is always considerable, sometimes exceeding the figure stated above for the National Council. Thus, in the Grand Council of Basel-Stadt out of 130 members, 44, or 33.7 per cent, are civil servants, 8 of them being employed by the federation and the remainder by the canton. Yet the number of public employees residing in Basel amounts to less than 12.8 per cent of the electorate of that canton.

---

[4] J. Ruchti, *Geschichte der Schweiz während des Weltkrieges, 1914–1919* (Bern: Haupt, 1928), p. 441.

[5] Cf. chap. ii.

Of course, it is not to be assumed that civil servants, any more than members of other occupational groups who hold legislative seats, represent their own class solely. Indeed, the unusual prominence of public employees in Swiss law-making bodies is attributed partly to the fact that Socialist workers in private undertakings find it damaging to their prospects or difficult to secure sufficient leisure to undertake duties as members of councils, local or national. Apparently, civil servants suffer less from such disabilities; and as most of them reside in larger urban centers, they are frequently preferred as candidates in working-class quarters.[6]

Criticisms of the Swiss civil service take many forms, few of them, however, being very damaging in character. In general it is accused of having amassed too much power; certain anxious patriots fear that with a continuance of the process their *Volksstaat* may be transformed into a *Beamtenstaat*, i.e., that the Swiss democratic state may give way to a bureaucratic state. Occasionally, extremists suggest that public employees be deprived of the right to vote, but the idea finds virtually no support among a people so thoroughly wedded to the principle of popular rule. On the other hand, proposals to limit the passive right of suffrage (i.e., the eligibility, of civil servants particularly to legislative office) are favored in some quarters. As they are considered to have more than their share of representation already, it is not to be wondered at that in 1922 an amendment to the federal constitution, proposed by initiative, which would have permitted the removal of the disqualifications of federal officials for membership in the National Council, was defeated by a popular vote of 257,469 to 160,181 and by a cantonal vote of 17 to 5.

At the outbreak of the World War the Swiss acquiesced, albeit reluctantly, in the famous plenipotentiary resolution whereby almost dictatorial powers were conferred upon the executive.[7] Always, however, they regarded it as an emergency measure, hostile to the spirit of their democracy and justified only by the extreme peril of the country. As soon as the war came to an end, they busied themselves in depriving the Federal Council, one by one, of the extraordinary powers which had been conferred upon it. And subsequently they have manifested, as in the initiative of 1922, all their usual jealousy of the executive power, which, nevertheless, as we shall see, did not prevent the passage, five years later, of a great legislative measure for the improvement of the condition of civil servants.

---

[6] E. Dürr, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

[7] Cf. the author's *Government and Politics of Switzerland*, p. 114.

Critics of the Swiss administrative service are accustomed to distinguish between elected officials on the one hand, who are said to be relatively free from bureaucratic traits, and appointive officials on the other, the latter, it is alleged, being more likely to lose touch with the people they serve, even to look down upon them at times with sovereign contempt. As least in contact with the masses the central administrative officials of the federal government are more commonly charged with the foregoing failings: "*Cela vient de Berne*" is an oft-repeated expression in the west, while "*Das händs z'Bärn obe verfüegt*" is scarcely less commonly heard in Eastern Switzerland.

The official class is alleged not only to exert too much power in dealing administratively with the people but also, as noted above, to have engrossed more than its rightful proportion of legislative power, thus partly obliterating the dividing line between two great spheres of government. While both federal and cantonal constitutions establish legislative supremacy, it is none the less true that when matters such as the foregoing are involved the Swiss are accustomed to argue as fervently in favor of the separation of powers—legislative, executive, and judicial—as any American devotee of Montesquieu's famous dogma. By way of subhead to the foregoing criticism, complaint is made that minor civil servants are able through their organized voting strength to get themselves elected to legislative bodies in such numbers that superior administrative officers are afraid to enforce discipline against them as freely as the good of the service demands.

It must be admitted, however, that most of the allegations of arbitrary action on the part of Swiss public officials seem rather mild. Perhaps the commonest is that they fix fees for certain services and fines for minor infractions of administrative regulations at too high a figure; nevertheless, such fees and fines are so small as compared with those in vogue elsewhere that the foreign observer is inclined to set down this particular criticism as a typical illustration of Swiss parsimony. As to occasional stiffness and harshness in enforcing administrative rules, it is to be observed that even in Switzerland there are citizens who employ impudence, subterfuge, or evasion in some of their dealings with public authority. Nor is one much inclined to cry "Chains and slavery" in chorus with those private owners of motor trucks who protested mightily because the federal post-office department reserved the color yellow for the use of its own service cars.

On the other side of the ledger must be entered many items highly creditable to the Swiss civil service. In the first place it has, without the use of competitive examinations on any considerable scale, succeeded in avoiding nearly all the evils connected with our own spoils system. In general this happy result is due to the fact that permanence of tenure prevails throughout the service. It is true that appointments to federal administrative office are made as a rule for terms of three years, but reappointments are the almost invariable practice. Laws with regard to wage increases, promotions, and retirement generally assume tenure during good behavior. Nevertheless, public employees dislike the three-year-term provision and are seeking to have it converted into something approximating more closely to actual practice, i.e., six- or ten-year terms or terms of indefinite length. If anything, the Swiss civil service suffers rather more from too long than too short tenure of office. In the absence of adequate retiring pensions hitherto, public employees naturally sought to continue in the harness even after their powers had waned; and humane superiors were inclined to permit them to do so although the service suffered and younger employees were thereby compelled to wait overlong for promotion. Under the circumstances the taunt of gerontocracy sometimes applied to the administration seems rather more cruel than humorous.

Even more creditable to the Swiss civil service than its freedom from spoils is its thoroughgoing honesty, which is admitted on all hands. Individual defalcations are extremely rare; cases of bribery almost unknown. Whenever any instance of either sort occurs, it creates an enormous sensation and is certain to meet not only with criminal punishment but with universal reprobation. Besides thoroughgoing honesty, hard unremitting industry, somewhat slow and of routine character, to be sure, yet reasonably punctual and dependable at all seasons, is the rule of the service. In short, one must agree with a recent writer on the subject who, while critical, nevertheless concedes that "as a whole our corps of public officials is entirely worthy of eulogy. It is honest, correct in its dealings with the public, and desirous of doing its work well. It seems to be quite superior to most of the corps of public officials in other states."[8]

As noted above, no great abuses of power have been charged against Swiss officialdom, which perhaps is the best explanation why the country has been so slow in adopting a system of administrative courts such as is found in other European countries. Here, as in so many fields of political reform, the cantons experimented at length before the federation took action. Basel-Stadt instituted an administrative court in 1905, Bern in 1909, and subsequently a number of other cantons have followed their example. Not until 1914 did the national chambers pass an amendment to the constitution (114*bis*) providing for a federal administrative court. Submitted to referendum, October 25, 1914, it was ratified by a popular vote of 204,392 to 123,331, and by a cantonal vote of 18 to 4. Action to put this amendment into effect has been exasperatingly slow. While part of the delay may be attributed to the war, it is obvious that the Federal Council, which was loath to part with its powers in this field, and certain higher administrative officials who anticipated that their own authority might be reduced by the new court, have been in no hurry to secure its establishment. At long last, however, a law was enacted, June 11, 1928, providing for two administrative judges who were to begin their functions early in the following year. Already criticism is heard to the effect that the powers of the new court are too sharply limited, and a movement is on foot to have them widened. With the accumulation of precedents handed down by the cantonal administrative courts and by the new federal administrative court in the case of decrees and regulations the constitutionality and legality of which are questionable, it is likely that criticisms on the score of abuse of official power will become much less frequent in Switzerland.

Far more important than the foregoing, however, was the drift of Swiss civil servants to the Social Democratic party, in consequence of which considerable tension developed between them and the government. Prior to 1905 living costs had declined throughout the country to the advantage of the salaried class generally. Under such circumstances it was but natural that public employees were satisfied with their lot.

The letter carrier was proud of the Swiss cross which he wore on his cap; the postmaster on whose house there was displayed a resplendent white cross in a red field, the postillion of the mountain stage-coach, the official of the central administration, the officials employed by the Department of

---

[8] A. Freymond, "Le Fonctionnarisme," in *Mitteilungen der Neuen Helvetischen Gesellschaft,* Heft 6 (November–December, 1928), S. 228.

Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones all felt themselves to be representatives among the people of the federal state and bore themselves correspondingly in their relations with the public.[9]

Gone long since are these idyllic conditions. Beginning with 1905 the cost of living has increased, nor did occasional advances of salary and high-prices-increments suffice to keep the head of the civil servant above water. Gradually he turned to strong organizations of the trade-union type and to party activity in an effort to improve his economic condition. A recent historian remarks:

> In the course of the decade 1905 to 1915 almost the whole mass of lower civil servants, including many teachers in primary and secondary schools, went over to the Social Democratic party,—at least in the cantons and communes where this party counted so many adherents that one could hope by its help to put through demands upon the authorities or referendum proposals.[10]

With the timorousness which is characteristic of them in all political matters the Swiss somewhat overestimated the danger of the foregoing development. It is notorious that civil servants who joined the Socialist party are among its most conservative members; few, if any, of them believe that their situation would be improved by revolution, a fact the sudden discovery of which caused pained surprise to those extreme radical leaders who attempted to foment the general strike of 1918.

Small as was the danger of violence, however, leaders of all parties recognized years ago the thoroughly unsatisfactory administrative situation resulting from the feeling on the part of a large majority of civil servants that they were underpaid, that the conditions of their employment were inexorably growing worse, and that no adequate measure of relief was in sight. Public opinion, formerly dominated by the conviction that rigid economy must be the rule of government employment, ultimately accepted the view that thoroughgoing reform was necessary in this field—reform which should take into account fully the increased cost of living and which, tempering economy with fairness, should seek to bring about a reconciliation between the state and its servants.

The result was an epoch-making Public Officials' Act *(Beamtengesetz)*, introduced in the chambers in March, 1925, and, after exhaustive discussion and innumerable amendments, passed June 30, 1927, by a vote of 25 to a few members who abstained from taking a hostile stand on the bill in the Council of States, and of 111 to 10 in the National Council. Opposition to the measure, voiced chiefly in the former body and resulting in some reductions of proposed salary increases, came, for the most part, from advocates of states' rights and members of the Peasants' and Catholic Conservative parties. In its final form, however, the Public Officials' Act received general approval. The best evidence to that effect was supplied by the failure to invoke the referendum against it, although threats to do so were made by certain radical leaders who thought that larger salary increases should have been granted.

---

[9] L. F. Meyer, "Grundsätzliches zur Frage der Stellung des Bundespersonals," in *Politische Rundschau,* 7. Jhrg. (January, 1928), S. 19.

[10] Eduard Fueter, *Die Schweiz seit 1848,* p. 235.

It is difficult to summarize the provisions of so extended a piece of legislation applying to some 35,000 federal employees all told—to say nothing of the innumerable decrees regarding its administration not all of which have yet (December, 1929) been published. In general the Public Officials' Act recognizes twenty-six grades of government employees and fixes adequate living salaries for each of them. Married men receive modest additions to the standard scale of their class, plus a small allowance (120 francs) for each child. One of the most striking features of the law is a schedule based on the relative cost of living in various places where public officials maintain their homes. These are assigned to six groups, a small deduction (100–120 francs) being made from the standard salaries of those who live in towns where living expenses are lowest, while additions ranging from 120 to 480 francs are granted those who reside in more expensive cities. Further, the law makes provision for sickness and accident on the part of public employees and for their surviving dependents in case of death. Prohibition of the right to strike is reaffirmed; on the other hand, guaranties are supplied against unjust treatment and overwork of the personnel. Finally, to bring about a more active spirit of co-operation in the service, a special commission *(Paritätische Kommission)* is to be set up.

It will require several years to determine whether the new law provides a satisfactory solution for the problems of Swiss federal employees, particularly whether it will bring about a reduction of political activity on their part. Naturally the Socialists have sought to make capital out of its enactment, claiming the lion's share of credit for that achievement. Nevertheless, the vote cast in the Council of States and the National Council makes it clear that all parties co-operated to that end. Many public employees are said to share the quite human feeling that the salary increases granted them are not so large as they should be, but in the main there is general agreement that a substantial advantage has been gained all along the line. On their part the state and the tax-paying public have assumed large and permanent financial burdens, but they seem to have done so in an unwontedly generous spirit and with the hope of better future relations between the government and its employees. On the whole, one cannot help admiring the breadth of scope and statesmanlike vision manifested by the Public Officials' Act. It goes far toward relieving the Swiss from the odium so often visited upon them of petty parsimony in their dealings with government employees of every sort.

Out of the discussion regarding the civil service that has been going on now for a decade or more in Switzerland have come numerous other suggestions.[11] Certain reformers urge that the public should be encouraged to criticize administrative errors more often, presumably by letters to official superiors and to the press. Judging by the number of such letters appearing in the latter, however, the aggrieved Swiss citizen is at all times sternly resolved to do his full duty in the premises. More conciliatory in approach are various proposals designed to bring about a better understanding on the part of citizens of the various branches of the public service, e.g., by lecture and discussion groups to be addressed by officials with the aid, wherever possible, of lantern slides and moving pictures and by visits to various administrative headquarters. Much good work of this sort is already being carried on by citizenship courses and has been referred to elsewhere.[12] To inspire a more eager and less routine spirit in the service, it is urged that rewards should be offered for inventions or improvements devised by public employees. The same end might be obtained, it is held, by bringing in fresh blood from the business and professional worlds outside. Political interference, although far less pernicious than in other countries, could be lessened by a more vigorous segregation of administrative from other public authorities, such as has been achieved in part by the federal railway system. In the latter connection it is significant that the canton of Freiburg has turned over its state electrical enterprises to a specialized council of administration which is extrapolitical and independent of legislative control.

All things considered, therefore, Switzerland's remaining problems in relation to its mass of civil servants seem far from insoluble. Unquestionably, in the earlier eagerness of the people to escape the Scylla of domination by large-scale private enterprise, very considerable risk was run of falling victim to the Charybdis of trade-union and socialistic activity on the part of strongly organized bodies of public employees. Indeed, it is still far from certain that the latter contingency has been reckoned with fully. Nothing in the whole process is more thoroughly Swiss, however, than the political capacity shown by civil servants, who, finding themselves under the harrow of higher living costs, organized and agitated, patiently and peacefully, until a large measure of relief was secured. The best guaranty that they will not be able, even if they should seek, to exploit their strength to the disadvantage of other classes and of the state as a whole is afforded by the fact that every occupational group in the country is equally well organized and equipped to look out for its own interests. Back of the welter of class interests, moreover, there is a sense of democratic fair play and an immemorial determination to avoid tyranny from every quarter which augurs well for the future.

---

[11] See, for example, the *Bulletin* of the New Helvetic Society for November–December, 1928 (14. Jhrg., Heft 6), which is largely devoted to this topic; also, F. Koch, *Die Stellung der Beamten und Angestellten im Staat und das Problem des Beamtenrechts* (St. Gallen: Fehr, 1916).

[12] Cf. chap. x.

SWISS MILITARY SERVICE

From a military point of view the Swiss army system has been described frequently.[13] It is a militia system, largely federal but still partly cantonal in control, which combines universal compulsory service with very short periods of intensive training, the whole accomplished with the smallest possible number of professional army officers and at a minimum cost to the taxpayer. For the training of an infantryman, including both recruit school and repetition courses, a total of only 153 days of actual service is required; for the training of a cavalryman, 184 days. That the system is effective, particularly in the large number of sharpshooters developed and in the training of troops to take every advantage of the mountainous country in which they would have to fight, is generally conceded. On the other hand, Switzerland is too small and too weak financially to provide the costly engines of offense and defense necessary for the prosecution of modern war on a large scale.

One other factor is of importance in estimating the effectiveness of the Swiss army system either in a technical sense or as a mechanism of civic training. It embodies a direct expression of the popular will.

---

[13] The best single reference book not too technical in character is Colonel Karl Egli's *Schweizer Heereskunde* (2d ed.; Zürich: Schulthess, 1916). Under the editorship of Colonel Léderrey a beautifully illustrated volume has just been issued entitled *Das Schweizer Heer* (Geneva: S.A.D.E.A., 1929), which contains valuable sections dealing with the history and present organization of the Swiss army. For a brief account in English, cf. chap. xi of the author's *Government and Politics of Switzerland.*

The military law of 1907, which reorganized and strengthened the whole system, was submitted to referendum and carried by a vote of 329,953 to 267,605. Care must be taken, however, not to exaggerate the significance of this expression on the part of the Swiss people. To many of them military preparedness is a nuisance, necessary, no doubt, in the present state of a fallen world, but exasperatingly costly in time and money, both of which they are resolved to give only to the minimum absolutely requisite for security. Beyond this, if war came they would fight resourcefully and stubbornly to the last man and the last gun.

The army, then, is in no sense the "darling" of the Swiss people. On the contrary, like other governmental institutions it has had its ups and downs in popular favor. Twelve years before the referendum of 1907 the people voted decisively against a constitutional amendment designed to strengthen it. From 1907 on, there was much grumbling over "Prussianization," and not a little criticism of higher army officers on the ground that they aped their German imperial confrères. At the outbreak of the World War, on the other hand, the Swiss people watched their troops marching off to guard the frontier with pride and gratitude, deeply thankful that the reorganization had been effected before the storm broke over Europe. Ticinese levies were fêted in German Switzerland; German-Swiss troops were received with true southern hospitality in Ticino. Costly as was the mobilization, it did much to knit the sections of the country closer together. By 1918, however, the bloody spectacle beyond their borders had disgusted many Swiss with all war and military preparedness. The use of the army to suppress the general strike in October of that year restored it to high favor among the conservative elements of the population, but at the same time greatly increased the bitterness with which radicals regarded it. Partly as a result of the hostility of the latter, an initiative measure was brought forward in 1921 which, while providing only for the suppression of military justice, was generally regarded as the first step in an intended campaign against the army system as a whole. If so, the rejection of the proposal by a popular vote of 393,151 to 198,696 and by a cantonal vote of 19 to 3 put an abrupt end to the project. Through all these changes of popular opinion, however, no inclination to exalt the army unduly was apparent. Quite as much as English or Americans, the Swiss accept the principle that military power must be subject to civil power.

Even if one goes back to the most stirring days of the Old Confederation when the Eidgenossen were everywhere adjudged the best soldiers of Europe, it is a remarkable fact that they showed no tendency to heroize their military chieftains; always they were more interested in practical ends—home defense, conquest, booty and pay—than in the bubble glory. It is a far cry from the mountain marauders and mercenaries of the fifteenth century to the peaceful peasants, watchmakers, merchants, school teachers, and hotel keepers of the present; yet something of the former survives in the latter. For more than a century the country has enjoyed profound peace with all its neighbors, nor can the brief civil war of the Sonderbund in 1847 have stirred up any enduring military enthusiasm. Nevertheless, all witnesses agree that, though latent, much of the old soldierly spirit and aptitude for arms are unmistakably present in the Swiss people of today. Two brief sentences of Paul Seippel's sum up the matter thoroughly: "The Swiss people is not a militaristic people. But it is a military people."[14] In a thoroughly humane spirit Heinrich Federer also comments upon the matter in his *Unser Herrgott und der Schweizer.* Referring not without a certain pride to the innumerable bloody exploits of the old *Eidgenossen,* he remarks: "But it is also true that these wars hurt more than they helped the Swiss soul, and even today our best historians do not know whether from case to case we or our enemies were in the right."[15]

If any one doubts the continuance of military instincts in the Swiss of today, the testimony of the pacifists of that country would convince him to the contrary. So strong is the sentiment against peace propagandists that many who sympathize with them prefer not to speak out. In a remarkable contribution to a series of studies dealing with the contents of the child mind, Alice Descoeudres has presented the thoughts and aspirations with regard to war and military service, of more than eight hundred young Swiss of both sexes from eleven to seventeen years of age.[16] Although the sympathies of the writer are clearly pacifist, her citations showing the impressions made upon children by uniforms, military bands and parades, the flag, the sentiment of patriotism, historic memories, and the like would rejoice the most ardent advocates of preparedness.

While the period actually spent by the Swiss in military training is shorter than that required by any other national army system, in a sense it may be said that many of them are soldiers *in posse,* if not *in esse,* from childhood to the confines of old age. Prior to entering the recruit school they are subject to various forms of preliminary training; afterward, if infantrymen, they belong to the *Élite,* or first-line division, from the age of twenty to thirty-two, with seven repetition courses of thirteen days each to perform; from thirty-three to forty they are enrolled in the *Landwehr*, or second line, with one repetition course, also of thirteen days' duration; finally, from forty-one to forty-eight they belong to the *Landsturm,* or territorial division, subject to call for home defense. Officers are counted capable of active service up to the age of fifty-three and, as a matter of fact, often remain in the army as much longer as their health permits.

---

[14] *Schweizerische Wahrheiten,* p. 19.

[15] *Op. cit.,* p. 17.

[16] "Ce que pensent les enfants," *III Le Militaire* (Geneva: Forum, 1924).

Regarding the various forms of preliminary training for military service, it may be said that so long as recruit examinations were kept up, public-school instruction in the three R's and in civics was directly useful to the young man entering upon his first period of duty. Not that such instruction has lost all importance since the suspension of the examinations in 1914. On the contrary, much of the efficiency of the Swiss army is due to the high educational average of its rank and file. It is rather in the field of gymnastic training, however, that the work of the public schools prepares most directly for military service. Immediately after the constitutional revision of 1874 a law drafted by Federal Councilor Welti was passed which provided for the physical education of all the schoolboys of the country with the primary purpose of developing them to army standards. Administration of this, as of all other school measures, was left to the cantons, subject however to the supervision of the federal government. Progress under the law of 1874 was slow at first owing largely to the lack of a sufficient number of gymnasium instructors, but by 1900 seven out of every eight boys between ten and fifteen years of age were under their care, and of more recent years virtually the entire male youth of the country is receiving physical training, primarily with the purpose of developing future military capacity. No doubt, however, its by-products of health and vigor are even more useful in civil life.

Various forms of pre-military training are also open to volunteers after required attendance in primary grades has been completed. Most interesting of these are the cadet organizations which are maintained by the middle schools of the country enrolling, all together, some 6,000 students in 47 corps. Furnished with miniature army rifles by the government, the latter obtain considerable practice in marksmanship and drill. Naturally pacifists object to the cadet corps as implanting militaristic ideas in the youthful mind. And army experts are by no means satisfied with their attainments, deeming them too schoolboyish and lax to afford proper preparation for the strenuous duties of the recruit school. Nevertheless, many officers in the Swiss army acquired their first enthusiasm for military life as members of cadet corps.[17] Since the middle schools are training grounds for the universities, and hence for the future intellectual leadership of the country, it is probable that the existence in so many of them of specific military instruction does affect materially the determining of public opinion of the country with regard to its army system.

Wholly outside the schools, whether of primary or middle grade, other opportunities are offered the youth of the country from fifteen to twenty years of age to prepare themselves in advance for military training. These take the form of courses of instruction in shooting, in gymnastics, and in the use of weapons, the enrolment in each for the year 1928 being respectively 9,758, 25,965, and 6,933 students. In support of these activities the federation grants a modest subsidy amounting to less than half a million francs annually.

At the age of twenty the young Swiss reports for instruction at the recruit school. If found physically fit, he is subjected to a course of training as strenuous as it is brief.[18] Chiefly, of course, the ends aimed at are purely military and the methods those of physical exercise, instruction in tactics, and the use of weapons. In such preliminary courses as a minority of the enlisted men may have received, due consideration had to be given to their immaturity; at the recruit school, on the other hand, the duty assigned is regarded as adult work to be performed under strict discipline. While it is the intent that no one shall be burdened beyond the point of exhaustion, tasks are assigned, nevertheless, up to the full measure of strength to meet them, and burdens are increased as rapidly as greater capacity is developed. Care is taken that periods of rest shall follow periods of exertion, and that sufficient change of duty be provided to prevent the men going stale. Observation of the work of recruits will convince anyone that the best of which they are capable is demanded and obtained from them.

It will be noted that what is barracks routine elsewhere is for the

---

[17] With regard to the value of cadet corps, see Colonel K. Fisch's *Erziehung zur Wehrpflicht* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1913), p. 11.

[18] According to Egli, *op. cit.*, p. 63, in 1910, when pedagogical as well as physical examinations were given, of the 33,316 young men liable to duty only 7.3 per cent were found unfit for service, 17.9 per cent were assigned to auxiliary branches because incapable of line service, and 11.4 per cent were set back one or two years to improve their physical or educational qualifications, leaving 63.4 per cent ready for training proper. The same authority notes that in times of financial distress higher physical standards have been set up deliberately with the purpose of reducing the number admitted to the recruit school. Thus, in 1879 only 42.9 per cent of those liable for duty were accepted.

Swiss a school. The term they employ, *Rekrutenschule*, is significant of their essentially pedagogical approach to all the problems that confront them, the military no less than those of civil life. Certainly a great deal of sound educational psychology underlies the instruction given young men at the threshold of their army career. According to the official manual dealing with the subject,

> It is a condition of success that those in command should adopt a rational attitude as instructors and teachers. Oppression and contemptuous treatment in dealing with recruits, an attitude of knowing everything better than they do which robs them of confidence and joy in their work, makes the commissioned or non-commissioned officer guilty of such practices unfit for command. . . . . In all exercises and in the whole performance of his duty the man under training should gain the conviction that the orders and regulations of his commanding officer require of him nothing that he cannot do if he puts all his powers into their execution. The development of this conviction is the foundation of all soldierly capacity. . . . . In military service it is necessary that definite commands be given, briefly, often sharply, and sometimes involving hardships. On the other hand, the older military traditions of brutality, of a haughty and insulting tone, frighten the troops from the beginning, creating first anxiety and uncertainty, later an unwilling spirit, thus making more difficult the attainment of the ends in view. Let officers exercise patience in dealing with weaker characters, increasing the demands upon them only by degrees. Everything likely to impress the recruit as chicane is to be avoided scrupulously. An officer who knows how to place himself in a proper relation with the men under his command will make no difficulties about talking with them in a comradely way during their free time and outside the service, sharing with them their joys and sorrows. In so doing, it will not be hard for him to maintain the respect due his position; he must avoid all appearance of seeking popularity, but he will assure himself the confidence and devotion of his men when they feel that his interest is natural, hearty, and sincere.[19]

Certainly language expressing so humane, rational, and comradely a spirit as the foregoing is unusual in official army manuals. While not always lived up to punctiliously by the more heavy-handed drill sergeants, neither is it confined entirely to the printed page. Reminiscences of former soldiers and literary pictures of Swiss army life give the impression that, in spite of the severe exercise and exposure involved, the recruit is treated with consideration, that time is left him for the cultivation of comradeship and joviality, that a spirit of toleration reigns broad enough to comprehend not only the vagaries of the clumsiest and stupidest "rookie" but also of the omnipresent and sometimes obstinate army mule.[20]

---

[19] Quoted from the official statement of the educational purposes *(Ausbildungsziele)* of the Swiss army. This most remarkable document, issued by the Military Department, February 27, 1908, was the work of the then Division Colonel Wille, afterward general in command of the Swiss army during the World War.

In addition to the hard practical work of drill and physical exercise a considerable amount of theoretical instruction is given in the recruit school. Usually lectures are used for this purpose, broken by occasional questions addressed to the hearers. As to method, the manual advises that "the discourses shall be fresh and lively in tone as befits soldiers; nor shall they ever be allowed to degenerate into a simple play of question and answer." That this advice is followed to the letter and that, as a result, the liveliest interest and participation are evoked on the part of the enlisted men is the opinion of all who have had the opportunity to observe Swiss army training.

It was, for example, the good fortune of the writer to be present during "theoretical instruction" at a recruit school held near Zürich in the summer of 1927, the theme of the discourse on this occasion being "The Purpose of the Swiss Army." After putting his company through a series of lively exercises, the young first-lieutenant in charge brought the men to rest in the shade of the stately forest trees which fringe the parade ground. "The purpose of the army," he explained in simple conversational manner, "is purely defensive. Long ago the Swiss gave up all thought of territorial expansion." To drive this point home, he brought up the refusal of the federation in 1919 to admit the Austrian province of Vorarlberg, developing the facts bearing on the case by a number of questions. In answering, honors went to a tall, blond, bespectacled youth who was getting in his military service between terms at a normal school; but several of the bullet-headed young peasants from Schaffhausen who made up the majority of the company took an active part in the responses, reflecting credit upon the canton to which they owed their schooling.

Continuing his lecture, the officer dealt with the arguments of those who maintain that Switzerland needs no defensive force of its own. "If neigboring great powers engage in war and one of them should invade the country, the others, it is said, would march to our relief." "But," observed the instructor,

> a friendly great power might at the moment need all its troops to defend itself. Of course, other nations have guaranteed Swiss neutrality; but in case of war, as von Moltke once observed "foreign help will be given only to the

---

[20] Excellent portrayals of Swiss military life are to be found in Charles Gos, *Sous le drapeau,* and Robert de Traz, *L'homme dans le rang,* both published by Payot, Lausanne, 1914, and subsequently translated into German.

extent that guarantors feel their immediate interests to be at stake." Even if aid were sent, it might arrive too late. Meanwhile the hostile power could overrun the whole of Switzerland and, once firmly intrenched in the country, could be dislodged only at a frightful cost in lives and treasure. As against such risks, a Swiss army in being would compel any possible aggressor to think twice before striking, to weigh the possibility that, in case he attacked, his losses might exceed his gains. Even if invasion occurred, the Swiss army might slow it up long enough so that aid from the outside could be brought into the country. Although small, the Swiss army is well trained and well equipped. Fighting in defense of home and country, it should make headway against great odds. Certain advantages would be in its favor—intimate knowledge of the country to be fought over; willing aid and information offered by the inhabitants who, of course, would give the enemy no aid and no information or only false information.

"But," continued the lecturer, "why defend our country at all? Why not lay down our arms and welcome the invader?" To these questions, as might be anticipated, answers came thick and fast. One reply, often repeated, to the effect that the Swiss like their own form of government with the liberty and democracy it confers, led to the comment that most certainly they would dislike a dictatorship such as that about which a neighboring nation seems for the present so enthusiastic. And the instructor added:

> Let other peoples have whatever forms of government they want, we Swiss wish to be left alone with our own; its democracy suits us best. Would any invader leave us our democratic military system with its short term of training which all alike must undergo, or would they, as in the period of French intervention, draft Swiss citizens to fight interminably in foreign wars? Would any invader leave our cantons in undisturbed possession of their large measure of local self-rule, our communes in possession of their town meetings? Is it not more likely that in their own interest they would insist upon a centralization of power, a uniformity of customs that is foreign to the Swiss nature? Would any invader leave us our three languages? Would it not seek rather to establish its own tongue in every part of Switzerland? We wish, instead, to maintain all three national languages equally, to say nothing of the innumerable homely local dialects of which we are all so fond and which Swiss of all classes speak. Among us there is no social distinction such as that existing in Germany between those who speak High German habitually and those who use only the local dialect. . . . . It is true that to keep order among ourselves we maintain policemen, who are, however, of our own people, speaking the local tongue and subject to civil authorities, whom we elect and can by our own votes displace. If our streets and villages were patrolled by bayoneted soldiers under the orders of a foreign power, the situation would prove quite different and far from pleasant.

It is quite impossible to convey the tone of the foregoing; but certain it is that, much as the theme invited it, the army officer's discourse was wholly free from chauvinism and flapdoodle. While, of course, frankly and strongly pro-military, the points stressed throughout were preparedness for defense and not for aggression, and the essential democracy, tolerance, and liberty of Swiss institutions. In simplicity, clearness, orderly arrangement of materials, and occasional repetition of important points the speaker's manner was not that of the barracks but of the schoolroom, where, indeed, as children most of the recruits must have heard similar arguments. Doubtless, however, the latter fell with new and stronger emphasis on this occasion because of the army atmosphere, because of the stands of rifles with blue-black barrels glistening in the sunshine just outside their own circle of shade, because of the staccato bursts of machine-gun fire high overhead, echoing and re-echoing from the adjacent mountain sides.

A word is in place here regarding the instructors, some two hundred in number assisted by fifty subalterns, who supervise both the practical and the theoretical work of the recruit schools. To begin with, all of them are army officers, which means, of course, that they have not only been through the training which every private soldier must undergo, but also have taken the more extended and severe course necessary to obtain a commission. In addition, aspirants for appointment as instructors must have a knowledge of two of the national languages and must possess a school certificate *(Reifezeugnis)* admitting them to university study. As a matter of fact, many of them are university graduates. For the training of instruction officers the federal *Polytechnikum* at Zürich conducts, under the supervision of the war department, a military school covering the work of one summer and two winter semesters.

It is no easy matter to estimate the effect of Swiss military training upon citizenship in later life. No doubt it is profound, partly because of its universality. One often hears the remark in Switzerland that the recruit school is like the public school, virtually every male citizen having attended both. Of course, public-school attendance lasts much longer; but, on the other hand, the recruit school brings the young manhood of the country together at a very impressionable age and under conditions that foster comradeship. Any two Swiss, from whatever part of the country, who have completed their training have something in common to talk about for the rest of their lives, and they do talk about it frequently and with gusto.

However difficult to appraise the results of military training upon

Swiss citizenship, it is quite possible to state what the government hopes these results may be. In a remarkable official statement the educational purposes *(Ausbildungsziele)* of the recruit school are detailed at length in almost lyric form, the whole being summed up as follows:

> Full of joy in the trade of the soldier and in the high achievement to their credit, with confidence in their commanding officers, with warm feeling and warm hearts, strengthened in body and soul, may our recruits return to their homes to the delight of their families and as honorable certificates to those who brought them up. In that case their military training will not only have contributed to the warlike ends it had in view; it will further have a deep after-effect upon civil life, promoting in the latter good conduct, order, devotion to simple duty, and willingness to sacrifice one's self for the good of others.

Impressions, no matter how deep, received in the recruit school at the age of twenty may be effaced in later years. However, the repetition courses keep memories vivid and military capacity active well into the middle years. A privilege enjoyed by cavalrymen of the first-line division whereby they may keep their mounts, subject to the call of the government for service at any time, accounts in part for the popularity of that branch of the service. Soldiers who have completed their periods of military training, including repetition courses, also become the possessors of their weapons and personal equipment, presenting them for official inspection from time to time. In many countries, no doubt, the old army rifle is a cherished souvenir; but in Switzerland it is not hung up to rust over the mantel—more often the owner keeps it in flawless condition and carries it about with him to all the shooting competitions of the neighborhood.

Elsewhere attention is called to the large number of rifle clubs flourishing in Switzerland.[21] Subsidized by the government primarily to maintain marksmanship, they also serve to keep alive the army spirit and memories of camp life among their more than 200,000 members. While the rifle clubs reach most effectively the large mass of former service men, there are a number of other special associations which perpetuate military traditions, the most prominent of which are the Swiss Officers Society, the Unions of Non-commissioned Officers, the Artillery Clubs, the Military Engineers' Clubs, and the Samaritan and Sanitary (Red Cross) Clubs. Quite apart from organizations of the foregoing character, individuals of prominence in every walk of life—particularly editors, teachers, diplomats, legislators and higher governmental officials generally—take a deep and abiding interest in the

[21] See chap. xiii.

army. In the National Council 22 per cent, and in the Council of States 32 per cent, of the members hold army commissions ranging all the way from first-lieutenancies to that of adjutant general.[22]

While the military system of Switzerland appears to be the most popular and intelligent as well as the least burdensome on record, it is not without opponents. The latter fall into two main classes, first, those whose objections are on political grounds; second, various groups of idealists. Most of the former are members of the Socialist or of the Communist party who hold that the army is too small and weak to prove satisfactory as a defensive force in case of invasion by one of the neighboring great powers, that in fact its principal use is to defend the existing capitalist order of society within the country against strikes or possible revolutionary movements. Members of this school generally are believers in international fraternity founded on the basis of workers' solidarity. They are willing to guarantee peace only on condition that the present bourgeois ruling classes are displaced by labor or socialist government throughout Europe. While anti-militarists under present conditions, they are not pacifists, being quite ready to countenance violence in order to bring about and maintain the revolutionary ideals they have in view. Indeed, the Communists in Zürich, Schaffhausen, and Basel-Stadt have undertaken the formation of a quasi-military *Arbeiter-Schutzwehr* with the alleged purpose of using it to protect workers' meetings and demonstrations and their party press against unwarranted attacks by the police or by pro-Fascist groups.[23] Besides political anti-militarists of the various descriptions noted above, a small number of politicians are inclined to make attacks upon the army system in districts where votes may be gained by such means.

Opponents of the army on ideal grounds include certain religious sectarians and believers in the Tolstoyan doctrine of non-resistance to evil. There are, also, a small number of scientific pacifists who maintain that with the evolution of humanity a state of perfection will be reached ultimately which will render wars impossible. Considerably more widespread is the view that disarmament has now attained a stage of development sufficient to justify the Swiss in taking the leadership of the world in this movement by abandoning their present military system. Such was the basis of the resolution adopted June 10,

[22] *Jahrbuch der eidgenössischen Räte, 1926.*

[23] Cf. *Basler Vorwärts,* February 18, 1928.

1928, by the Union of Primary School Teachers of Geneva, which was widely discussed throughout the country.[24]

In addition to school teachers, who, however, are divided on the question and who, as we have noted already, furnish their full quota to the ranks of army officers, a considerable number of Protestant clergymen are pacifists. The Catholic priesthood is not in sympathy with the anti-militarist movement, judging by the attitude of the Catholic Conservative party, which favors a small but effective military system such as the present, with the costs kept down to the average of the last few years. Excepting the Socialists and Communists, the other larger parties of Switzerland generally support the army as it now stands.

Socialist opposition to the Swiss military system has been embarrassed somewhat of late by the action of party comrades in other countries, notably France and Belgium, who have shown themselves willing to give a certain measure of support to proposals for national defense. It was embarrassed still more by a resolution adopted in 1928 by the Socialist International Congress at Brussels in favor of the replacement of standing armies by a militia system similar to that of Switzerland. In spite of this resolution, Swiss Socialists have remained intransigent, and will doubtless continue, as before, to vote each year against the military budget. Since they form a minority only of the chambers, this policy serves as a protest but has no practical effect. According to militarists, it is kept up solely as a means of gaining votes. From the Socialist point of view, it may be defended as a step toward the ultimate ideal of complete disarmament, Switzerland already having in her militia organization a system relatively ideal, i.e., from the point of view of countries possessing standing armies. Nevertheless, criticism of the present methods of training by members of the party is usually severe in the extreme, the use of federal troops in the general strike of 1918 still rankles, and they are quick to interpellate the military department whenever the slightest abuse or even accident occurs at any recruit school.

Pacifist arguments, while complicated somewhat by varying interpretations of the rights and duties of a neutral which is also a member of the League of Nations, are much the same in Switzerland as elsewhere. On the other hand, proposals made in that country in the nature of a "moral equivalent for war," or rather for war-preparedness, offer at least one decided novelty, namely, that of civilian service to take the place of military training. The matter was brought to the attention of the public by a petition addressed to the federal chambers in 1922, praying that

---

[24] For an extended reply, somewhat acrid at times, to pacifist propaganda of various kinds, and particularly to that emanating from pedagogical groups, see Colonel F. Feyler, *L'antimilitarisme en Suisse* (Lausanne: Payot, 1928).

> (1) a civilian service shall be instituted for men who, because of conscientious motives, refuse to serve in the army; (2) this service shall have for its end the physical and moral education of the citizen, the development of the spirit of comradeship and vital love of country and of people; and at the same time the realization for the good of the community of various civilian projects such as reclamation by drainage or irrigation, ameliorations in high Alpine districts, afforestation work, assistance in cases of natural catastrophes and other public calamities.[25]

No legislative enactment followed the reception of the petition. The latter, indeed, was open to the objection that action should have been taken rather by way of the initiative, since universal compulsory military service is provided for by the constitution.[26] Failure to resort to the initiative argues, of course, the impossibility—of which there seems to be no doubt, from any viewpoint—of securing the necessary 50,000 signatures. Nevertheless, the Waldvogel motion, as it came to be known from the name of its principal proponent in the National Council, has attracted considerable discussion since 1923.[27] Interest was greatly stimulated in it by efforts to realize the proposal on a small scale at Mesocco and Bosco, both in the canton of Ticino, during the summers of 1925 and 1926. At the former a small group, mostly of students, volunteered their services in the work of restoring the picturesque old castle ruined in 1526. The Bosco student vacation colony of 1926 devoted itself to reclamation work in the high Alpine village of that name (4,941 feet above sea-level), the inhabitants of which had suffered unusually severe property losses from recent avalanches.[28] Volunteers were expected to remain at least two and, if possible, four weeks each, receiving food, lodging, and railroad fare in return for work performed. During the period from July 20, the average number of participants was thirty-five. Even at the extremely low wage scale prevailing in that remote mountain valley, the value of the services performed by the colony showed a slight margin over cost, the latter being covered in large part by philanthropic contributions. Moral values are harder to compute; but on the part of the students there was the experience gained in a most unusual undertaking, helpful to their fellow-men and rich perhaps in social suggestions. To the villagers themselves, hard pressed by the rigors of life in the high Alps and accustomed to see visitors from the cities only in the guise of tourists, the whole thing must have been an astounding and heartening piece of good luck. In any event, the experiment was considerably larger in scope and much better planned than Ruskin's somewhat similar adventure with Oxford university students in repairing the roads of the neighboring village of Hincksey. On the other hand, neither the Mesocco nor the Bosco volunteers spent so long a time at the work as the shortest term of service in the Swiss recruit school. Experiments along similar lines are being made in other parts of the country, recent news articles containing accounts of a student colony engaged during the summer of 1929 in clearing away glacial débris at Bonatchess, a remote little mountain village of Lower Valais.

---

[25] Albert Picot, *Le service civil* (Lausanne: La Concorde, 1923).

[26] Art. 18.

[27] Cf. article in *Der Staatsbürger,* 9. Jhrg., Nr. 8 (April 16, 1925), S. 60.

[28] Cf. H. Bernard and A. Koller, *Die Studentenferienkolonie Bosco (1926),* published as No. 50 of the "Schriften der schweizerischen Vereinigung für Innenkolonisation und industrielle Landwirtschaft" (Bern: Verlag Benteli, 1926), which took great interest in the work as a possible aid in preventing the depopulation of the higher mountain areas of Switzerland.

As a substitute for military training the proposal for civilian service had to meet not only the constitutional difficulty noted above but also the embittered opposition of army officers. It is obviously a plan that might be carried out satisfactorily in time of peace, for in a country like Switzerland works of reclamation and sanitation could be made to involve quite as much exposure and exertion as the work of the recruit school. To meet possible objections on this score, the Waldvogel motion provided that the term of civilian service should be longer by a third than that of military training. In time of war or threatened war, however, the civilian camps would probably be thronged with applicants seeking to avoid the perils involved in active service with the army. And it is hardly likely that those who risked their lives in front-line trenches, or public opinion generally, would tolerate exemption based on civilian labors performed within the country during time of war.[29]

It is a curious fact, doubtless related to the Swiss passion for education, that civilian service conceived not as a substitute for, but rather as a supplement to, the recruit school has made considerable appeal to leaders of thought in the country. Ever ready to welcome any proposal for civic training, they argue that, while military drill prepares for war which may never come, there is, in spite of all the public-school system accomplishes, a dearth of preparation for the duties of civilian life which all must face. There are even enthusiasts who hold that civilian training should be provided not only for young men, as would be the case if it were conceived only as a substitute for the recruit school, but that all young women as well should be subjected to it in order that the number of capable mothers, housekeepers, nurses, and women workers generally should be thereby increased. In this respect, if not in willingness to confer the right to the vote, Plato's feminism is not without adherents in contemporary Switzerland.

---

[29] Colonel Fyler maintains (*op. cit., p. 72*) that exemption based on civilian service further conflicts with Article 4 of the Swiss federal constitution, which provides that "all Swiss are equal before the law, ... without privileges . . . . of person."

Besides civilian service, the Union of Primary Teachers of Geneva, in their startling resolution of 1927, made various other suggestions for the use of the money now spent on military preparedness. The latter invited Swiss teachers generally to demand:

1. Suppression of the military budget and the employment of the credits voted to it for old-age insurance and for the fight against tuberculosis and cancer;
2. Establishment by Switzerland and in Switzerland of centers for the physical and moral regeneration of the most needy children from the great capitals of Europe.

Undoubtedly the second of the foregoing proposals is "*le plus beau geste qui soit*," to quote the resolution further, whether or not it would "place the country at the head of civilization." To anyone familiar with Switzerland's magnificent relief work during the World War it may not seem so unusual, however. The Genevan teachers believed that, in thus creating a powerful organization for mutual international aid, the country would render itself morally unassailable. It is almost needless to say that advocates of preparedness do not share this opinion. They hold that no amount of health-giving relief to poor children, Italian or otherwise, would prevent Mussolini, for example, from taking measures to safeguard himself in case the disbandment of the Swiss army left the passes of the Alps open to his enemies. And the more extreme among them assert that, in all likelihood, if war broke out with France, he would not feel himself fully safeguarded until after he had seized the canton of Ticino and pushed the Italian boundary line to the summits of the Gotthard massif.

Article 49 of the Swiss federal constitution provides that no one may, because of his religious views, be freed from the performance of civic duties. In practice conscientious objectors are treated with a large measure of consideration. Colonel Feyler is authority for the statement that "one will not find a recruit in Switzerland who will be compelled by authority to make use of a rifle, even to fire at a target, if his sentiments are hostile thereto."[30] Recruiting commissions proceed with great circumspection. Just as they assign carters to horse transport units, chauffeurs to automobile detachments, cooks to traveling kitchens, accountants to administrative services, so also they find places in the Red Cross for the rare youngsters who recoil from the use of lethal weapons. Of course, this is the practice of peace times. During the World War a small number of *réfractaires* who refused any form of military service were condemned to penalties involving a few months' imprisonment and the loss of civil rights for a short term of years. As they were called up and re-sentenced annually, the situation became an embarrassing one, even for army officers. In some cases it was solved, not without a certain sense of humor, by army surgeons who obligingly found the accused mentally unfit for military service; in others, by exercise of General Wille's pardoning power. During the World War and after, the Swiss government was criticized somewhat savagely for its treatment of conscientious objectors along the foregoing lines; nevertheless, its policies seem exceptionally tolerant, especially when one takes into account the fact that at the same time *réfractaires* in Germany, Austria, and Russia were being executed summarily by firing squads. Of course, if Switzerland should ever be involved in war on its own account, public sentiment would doubtless harden, with the result that conscientious objectors might receive much more severe treatment than was accorded them between 1914 and 1918.

Reference has been made elsewhere to the spirit of caution notable in Swiss politics and life, a spirit so marked at times that to the observer from a great state it seems exaggerated, almost approaching pusillanimity. If anywhere, one would expect this spirit to be less in evidence in connection with their army system. And indeed, the latter is to them a tower of strength. Yet never do the Swiss refer to it in a boastful, swaggering manner. When they assert its purely defensive purpose, there is every reason to believe them implicitly, whatever may be thought of similar statements emanating from the statesmen of world-powers. One may agree without reservations to Lord Robert Cecil's statement that: "The ideal military organization of Europe would be the universal adoption of something like the Swiss system of a civic militia, which, though useful for the actual defense of territory, has never been and will never be a menace to any of its neighbors."[31]

---

[30] *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

[31] Article on "Ten Years of the League," in the *Living Age*, CCCXXXVII (October 15, 1929), 208.

Consciousness of their relative weakness, as contrasted with the might of neighboring nations, accounts in part for Swiss caution, but only in part. There is also a strong sense of moral obligation to the principle of neutrality to which they are pledged in all loyalty. Both these factors have conditioned national life for so long a time that they have remolded the soul of the Swiss people. As Konrad Falke so finely puts the matter,

> It makes a tremendous difference whether a man has been brought up to the thought: "You belong to a great power which one day must fight for world supremacy," or whether he must always say to himself: "If it should come finally to fighting, we can hope for nothing better than to keep what we already have." The two are fundamentally different formative conceptions of life, in the light of which all detailed questions of existence take on a different appearance; much deeper than one is accustomed to assume is the influence of the politics of a people upon its ethical attitude, and in turn the latter is influenced by the former. In this mutual action and reaction the character of a people is formed; by their exceptional policy of neutrality the Swiss have been molded gradually into a people that, through its forced-back-upon-itselfness, differs more from all its neighbors than it resembles this one or that one of them in language or civilization.[32]

RECRUIT EXAMINATIONS

Democracy in Switzerland is not a matter of the ballot box only. As we have already noted, the Swiss themselves are fond of referring to the essential democracy both of their schools with universal compulsory attendance and of their army with universal compulsory military service. Until recently the school system and the army system were closely related through the recruit examinations *(Rekrutenprüfungen)*, which were developed to a much higher degree than in any other country. Although abandoned at the outbreak of the World War, the desirability of restoring these tests has been an open question, debated with great fulness and not a little heat ever since 1918. In 1927 the Federal Council recommended their resumption on a somewhat modified basis. Considering the importance of the experience gained through the examinations from 1875 to 1914, and the interest of the arguments, pro and con, from 1918 to 1929, the subject deserves careful consideration.

As in the case of so many other Swiss institutions, recruit examinations were worked out thoroughly in the cantonal sphere before being adopted by the federal government. Solothurn, moved by the unsatisfactory condition of its schools, was the first to experiment with them in 1854. From that date to the adoption of the revised federal constitution in 1874, no fewer than twenty cantons introduced them in one form or another.[33] In the latter year they were established on a uniform basis for the whole country by the federal government, the first examinations under the new system taking place in 1875.

---

[32] *Das demokratische Ideal und unsere nationale Erziehung* (Zürich: Rascher, 1915), p. 25.

Besides the good results attained under cantonal administration, various motives favored the extension and unification on a national scale of the recruit examination system. It was a period of great interest in popular education, heightened materially by the recent introduction of the federal referendum and initiative. Unless the voter was educated to his new duties, it was felt that the future of the country would be insecure. Wherever the recruit examinations had been experimented with by the cantons, their repercussion upon the schools, raising their standards and diminishing illiteracy, was most satisfactory. Military considerations also spoke in favor of the plan. The Swiss had followed the stirring drama of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71 with the deepest interest. Through their work of mercy in receiving and caring for the 85,000 men of Bourbaki's defeated army they were aware of the inferior education and organization of the French soldiery. On the other hand, they were inclined to attribute Germany's military successes largely to its superiority in these particulars.

Being convinced as to the desirability of recruit examinations from the point of view of popular education—always a matter of prime importance to the Swiss—and equally as to their desirability from the military point of view, the federal government, aided by the leading teachers of the time, made a thorough job of the new system. It should be noted here that the recruit examinations were essentially pedagogical in character, dealing entirely at the beginning, and largely down to their abolition, with ordinary school subjects. Not until 1904 were gymnastic examinations added to the system, although, of course, medical tests had always been employed to weed out men physically unfit for service.[34] Some idea of the enormous volume of work necessary to administer the system may be gained from the fact that during the last five years of its existence twenty-five thousand young men were examined annually.

---

[33] See article on "Die Rekrutenprüfungen, von ihrer Einführung und von ihrem Werte," in *Der Staatsbürger,* 8. Jhrg., Nr. 4 (February 16, 1924), S. 29.

[34] Introduced experimentally in the year stated above, the gymnastic examinations were specifically provided for by the military organization law of 1907, Art. 103, §2. Although older, the pedagogical examinations rested on a much less firm legal foundation. Basing its action upon Art. 27 of the constitution, the Federal Council authorized the pedagogical examinations by a decree which took effect in 1875, the Federal Assembly manifesting its assent by voting the necessary appropriations.

The subjects included under the federal recruit examinations were four in number: reading, theme-writing, arithmetic, and civics.[35] For the first of these the examiners had at their disposal a number of passages in the mother-tongue of the recruit, each of about one hundred words in length, those candidates being adjudged highest who not only read fluently and with proper intonation but who were able also to restate in their own words correctly as to content and order the sense of the original.

Theme-writing, the second subject, took a form not unlike tests for admission to English 1 in American colleges and universities. The recruit was asked to write a letter to some relative dealing with personal or business affairs, or was given the choice of a subject for a short essay from a list covering all the commoner experiences of life. Papers were marked as follows: first grade, entirely or nearly correct in content and form; second grade, satisfactory in a logical sense but containing several minor or a few major errors of language; third grade, weak in writing and expression but connected and comprehensible in thought; fourth grade, poor and almost worthless performance for practical purposes; fifth grade, completely valueless.

In arithmetic the recruit was given two lists of four questions each, involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. One of the lists had to be answered in writing, the other orally—the latter being a test in what used to be known in American schools as "mental arithmetic." So far as possible, the subject matter of these examinations was adapted to the occupation of the candidate; thus a peasant would be required to answer questions dealing with land measurement, the weights, measures, or prices of agricultural products, and the like; a clerk, questions involving business transactions, rents, and interest; and so on. Questions in mental arithmetic were, of course, much simpler but involved operations of the same general character as those presented in the list which the recruit was permitted to answer in writing.

---

[35] An interesting account of the system of recruit examinations, evidently inspired by the wish to see them introduced into Germany, is presented by Dr. Adolf Hedler in an article on "Der staatsbürgerliche Unterricht an den Schweizerschulen," *Preussische Jahrbücher,* CXXXIX, Heft 1 (1910), 60–90. The actual conduct of the examinations is vividly described by Dr. P. M. Ruhlmann, "Volksheer und Volksbildung in der Schweiz," *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,* July 8, 1919, reprinted in *Der Staatsbürger,* 8. Jhrg., Nr. 10, 11 (May 16, June 1, 1924), S. 78, 89. One of the most valuable treatises on the subject, published as a pamphlet in 1910 with the official approval of the Swiss Military Department, is entitled *Wegleitung fur die pädagogische Prüfung bei der Aushebung der Wehrpflichtigen.*

As to the fourth subject included in recruit examinations, "*Vaterlandskunde*" (for which our nearest equivalent perhaps is the word "civics"), it covered in reality three fields, namely, the geography, history, and constitution of the country. In the first of these much use was made of a so-called "*Stumme Karte*," i.e., a blank map showing physical features, boundary lines, and railroads, but no place names,[36] on which the candidate was required to pick out mountain ranges, passes, rivers, lakes, and cities, and to show what route he would follow in making a long journey through the country. It is obvious that a young man without extended school education but accustomed to going about with his eyes open might do much better on such a test than an unobservant university student. In examinations on the history and constitution of the country the questions used in the oral tests also took into account the occupation and amount of schooling of the candidate, much more being required for a first grade on the part of those who had enjoyed exceptional educational advantages than in the case of those who had been obliged to leave school at an early age to earn a living.

As an example of a thoroughly unsatisfactory performance in civics—the sort of thing that, unusual as it is, causes patriotic Swiss to despair of their school system and even of the future of their country—the following may be quoted. Recruit A——, whose family was fairly well-to-do and resided in a small mountain village at a distance of only ten minutes from the nearest schoolhouse, appeared for examination bringing a school record-card, as all candidates are obliged to do, showing that he had been impudent to his teachers, and had evaded every educational obligation not absolutely required by law and one that was so required, incurring, as a result of the latter, a court penalty. In reply to the question: "Through what towns did you come on the way to the examination?" Recruit A—— was able to recall only one out of four. *Question:* "To what place does the pass through the mountains lead which begins in your village?" *Answer:* "Never been over it, don't know." *Question:* "What is the name of your canton and its capital?" Recruit A—— did know the former but not the latter. *Question:* "Can you point out your canton on the blank map of the country?" *Answer:* "I don't understand maps at all." *Question:* "Is German the only language spoken in Switzerland?" *Answer:* "I believe Welsch (foreign) also, but I don't know where." *Question:* "What were the names of the three confederates of the Rütli?" Silence. *Question:* "Why is the Rütli famous?" *Answer:* "Because of a battle against the French." *Question:* "Name a man famous in Swiss history." *Answer:* "Gessler." *Question:* "Do you know any other?" *Answer:* "No." *Question:* "What can you tell of Gessler?" *Answer:* "He fought at Sempach." *Question:* "By whom is the mayor of your commune elected?" *Answer:* "I never troubled myself about such matters." *Question:* "Why were you so unwilling to go to school?" *Answer:* "I didn't like to study, and at home they always said it didn't do you a bit of good." In justice to Recruit A—— it must be admitted that he was fairly consistent throughout in his lack of preparation; his grades being recorded as follows:

---

[36] A map of this character may be found in Carl Huber, *Praktische Vorbereitung auf die schweizerische Rekrutenprüfung* (Frauenfeld: Huber), which is one of the best manuals specially designed to train candidates for the recruit examinations. Among others of the same character, E. Kalin, *Der Schweizer Rekrut* (9th ed.; Zürich: Verlag Füssli, 1910), presents the necessary information on geography and history admirably in the briefest possible compass. Civics textbooks prepared for use in continuation schools also give particular attention to the recruit examinations, e.g., A. Perriard, *Petit manuel de connaissances civiques d'après le Guide pratique aux recrues Suisses par Perriard et Golaz* (a required book in the continuation schools of the Canton of Freiburg) (2d ed.; Zürich: Füssli, 1913); G. Wiget, *Vaterlandskunde für Schweizerjünglinge an der Schwelle der Aktivbürgerschaft* (4th ed.; St. Gallen: Fehr, 1920); and S. Wittwer, *Kurz gefasste Vaterlandskunde* (6th ed.; Bern: Francke, 1910).

5	5	4	5

meaning complete failure in reading, theme-writing, and civics, and a barely passing mark in arithmetic.[37]

At the same examination highest marks were attained by two candidates, one a university student of Basel, the other a young peasant from the mountain district of Upper Valais. The former described in detail a journey from his own city to Lugano, naming all the principal cities, rivers, and mountains passed on the way, and even stating approximately their elevations above sea-level. In history, after a number of general questions, he was allowed to choose between the ancient and modern periods. Taking the former, he dealt in sharp, correct outlines with the lake-dwellers, Helvetians, Romans, Allemanians, Burgundians, Goths, and Franks. On the constitution he showed wide familiarity with the relations of Switzerland to foreign countries, including the organization of its diplomatic and consular services, neutrality, the right of asylum, and the principal treaties dealing with commerce and the right of settlement and residence. Although he had never attended an advanced school, the young peasant from Upper Valais had traveled somewhat extensively through the country with his brother, and a few years earlier had taken a course to prepare himself as a guide to mountain climbers. Questioned on the phenomena of the higher Alpine world, he displayed a thorough first-hand knowledge, pointing out readily on the blank map all the passes in a wide range of territory. In history he retained a large part of what he had learned in school about the development of the Confederation, and proved that he had prepared himself excellently on the annals of his own canton. He did not have a large fund of accurate information on the federal constitution, but he did know that Valais sent five representatives to the National Council and two to the Council of States and how they were elected; also he was thoroughly informed on the industries and finances of his canton and on all legislation regarding hunting, fishing, forestry, and the like.

---

[37] In general a mark of 1 meant "excellent"; of 2, "good"; of 3, "satisfactory"; of 4, "poor"; of 5, "failure."

It will be recalled that a favorite device of the enemies of our civil service system is to assert that the examinations which it employs are made up of questions dealing with petty details or with matters that are inconsequential, immaterial, and irrelevant. Swiss opponents of recruit examinations employ similar tactics, citing, as examples, such alleged questions as the following: "Does the Rawil flow east or west past the Wildstrubel?"[38] "Was Hans Waldmann strangled, guillotined, or shot?"[39] In fact, the charge was unwarranted, minor or unimportant questions being avoided as a rule. It was the purpose of the experts who conducted the tests not to find out what the candidate did not know, but rather to ascertain what he did know.

Grades given in the recruit examinations were averaged simply by adding them together, the best attainable mark thus being 4. In reporting results, it was the earlier practice to classify candidates in three lists, the highest containing those whose averages ranged from 4 to 6; the second, from 7 to 11; and the third, 12 and more. Unquestionably, the system of grading and listing recruits enabled the Swiss army command to handle them more intelligently. Privates with high averages were naturally preferred for promotion to non-commissioned and later to commissioned officers. A soldier whose service record showed a 3 or worse grade found it difficult to secure enrolment in the coveted cavalry. Recruits who fell into the lowest category (12+)

---

[38] The Rawil is a small stream and the Wildstrubel a mountain in the Bernese Oberland. As a matter of fact, the course of the Rawil is neither to the east nor west, but to the north.

[39] Hans Waldmann was an energetic and rather dictatorial mayor of Zürich from 1483–89. In the latter year he was overthrown and beheaded by his enemies.

were assigned, as nearly equally as possible, to the infantry and the special arms of the service. In matters of routine, and particularly of discipline, army officers were accustomed to take into account the mental and physical weaknesses discovered among their men by the examinations; as a result the brutal mishandling of soldiers formerly so common in certain European countries was extremely rare in Switzerland. Even after a recruit had completed his period of military training, a high examination average noted on his service record often made it easier for him to secure employment. Public-school textbooks on civics sometimes reminded the pupil that "nowadays anyone seeking employment in private or public enterprises, as railroad employee, etc., who has a military service record showing a good pedagogic grade and no disciplinary penalties, gives himself the best possible of recommendations."[40]

Unfortunately, the system of classifying men into three groups on the basis of their averages is not followed uniformly in the federal statistical reports on the subject. As a consequence, it is difficult to show the general drift of examination results. So far as figures are obtainable on the percentage of assignments to the three groups, they indicate steady and considerable improvement in the intellectual quality of the rank and file, although of course, as every teacher knows, much depends, especially when comparisons are to be made, upon the severity of the tests and of the grading and the difficulty of securing uniformity in such matters. That Swiss popular education improved markedly in the decades following 1875 is, however, beyond question, although this result can be attributed in part only to the influence of the recruit examinations. At the beginning of the period the latter showed among men entering their period of army training 3.6 per cent of illiterates for the country as a whole. In some cantons the results were much less favorable, thus Freiburg had 13.6; Valais, 14.4; Schwyz, 18.7; and Appenzell i. R., 31.5 per cent of illiterates. By 1909, however, the country could felicitate itself that illiteracy had virtually been wiped out among men of military age. Considering only the best and the worst among the candidates, Colonel Karl Egli, of the General Staff, reached a similar conclusion regarding the educational improvement of the raw material offered the Swiss army.[41] His figures are given in Table VI.

Besides the use made by army authorities of examination results, they were given wide publicity in statistical form through official reports and the press. In consequence they came to be used as indexes of the relative efficiency of the school system in the various cantons, of cities and towns within the same canton, even, it is said, of the abilities of instructors within the same school. Advocates of recruit examinations regarded the spirit of emulation thus fostered an altogether excellent thing, particularly since it stimulated the study of civics and produced not only better soldiers but better citizens as well.

---

[40] Quoted from Brenno Bertoni, *Lezioncine di Civica,* p. 133.

[41] *Schweizer Heereskunde* (Zürich: Schulthess, 1916), p. 58.

On the other hand, opponents criticized the competitive effect of the system severely. Anyone familiar with educational processes knows the extreme skepticism of teachers regarding all systems of grading. In Switzerland charges, not, indeed, of unfairness but of varying standards from place to place, were frequently made. Drill-master methods of coaching employed by certain schools to improve the averages of their candidates were hotly denounced by the advocates of inspiration as opposed to perspiration. Twenty-hour review courses, given in some places immediately before the young men left to meet the tests, were crams of the most graceless sort. In various of the inner cantons where educational standards were notoriously inferior, premiums were granted to teachers whose students made high marks in the recruit examinations, and, in one case at least, to the students themselves who came out at the top of the list. The practice seems to have been successful in obtaining for these cantons a better scholastic rating than they deserved, but it was generally felt to be unfair and unprofessional.

TABLE VI

RESULTS OF EACH 100 RECRUITS EXAMINED

	Very Good (Highest Grade in More than Two Subjects)	Very Poor (Fourth Grade or Failure in More than One Subject)
1881	17	27
1890	19	14
1900	28	8
1910	38	5
1911	39	5
1912	40	4
1913	40	5

At the outbreak of the World War recruit examinations were abandoned. During the hurried period of mobilization that ensued in Switzerland army officers were far too busy, and teachers as well (for many of the latter hold commissions in the army), to conduct the examinations. The need of the hour was to rush men to guard the frontiers, not to test them in detail. Another point urged against examinations at the time was the expense involved, although the figures reported on this score are, like all others relating to Swiss administration, so low as almost to provoke incredulity.

Scarcely had the World War come to an end, however, when advocates of the system of recruit examinations took up the cudgels to secure its restoration. They quoted all the experience of the past, repeating the arguments in its favor noted above. In addition they denounced the absorption of contemporary youth in football and other sports, in card-playing and the frequenting of taverns. Per contra, recruit examinations, it was held, would give the boy in school something definite for which to prepare. Those who were compelled to go to work at an early age would be aware that they must take the examinations before beginning their military service and, as a result, would endeavor to keep fresh in their minds what they knew about reading, writing, arithmetic, and civics. Those who attended industrial and commercial schools—a majority of the young men of the country, by the way—were too prone to devote themselves exclusively to bread-and-butter subjects. Here, again, the recruit examinations, particularly in civics, would function as a reminder that the state also must be served not only in war but in peace. A democracy which, like Switzerland, conferred the largest and most important powers upon its voters, including not only the selection of office-holders but also final decision upon legislation through the initiative and referendum, must demand of its citizens at least that minimum of knowledge regarding the constitution and public affairs which was requisite to pass the recruit examinations. Moreover, Switzerland aspired to still higher things: it was not merely a democracy, but the most complete democracy in existence; it was intrusted with a political and cultural mission of importance to the world at large, a mission that could not be realized without a body of citizens possessed of civic knowledge and the ability to form an independent judgment on political questions.

Arguments in formidable array were also made against recruit examinations during the period of controversy following the World War. Preparation for the pedagogical tests, it was alleged, overburdened the free time of young men after they had left public school and were struggling to get a start in life. Those who were compelled to go to industrial schools found the work extremely exacting. As the result of a reform of the higher schools *(Mittelschulen)* in 1915, more attention is being paid to the study of civics anyway; and it is fair to presume that young men are better prepared in this subject than they were prior to 1914 under such pressure as the recruit examinations placed upon them. As a matter of fact, according to some authorities, the great mass of Swiss boys regarded the military tests with indifference, knowing that they must serve in the army no matter what grades they received. Consequently, it is absurd to maintain that they derived any permanent benefit as citizens from the experience.

Some of the more radical opponents of the recruit examination system deplored the too close connection which it established between army and school, holding that the latter was to a degree perverted to the purpose of the former, with the result that Swiss children were subtly inoculated with militaristic virus. Others of more moderate views nevertheless condemned the system as nationalistic in its effects, as being centralized and controlled too largely from Bern. As to the latter point, one is safe in assuming that it will be worked overtime in connection with any Swiss political issue, no matter what its character. In 1924 an expert commission, composed of legislators and teachers appointed by the federal Military Department, actually proposed to hand over the conduct of examinations to the cantons.[42] If this proposal had been adopted, in all probability the tests would have degenerated into a farce; nevertheless, it delighted the states' rights element because it permitted them to call the music while leaving the federal government to pay the piper. In the end, as we shall have occasion to note later, the cantons demanded a two-thirds representation in the administration of the examinations.

Opponents of the recruit examinations criticized them, further, as much too "pedagogical," that is, as laying far more stress upon memory drill over subjects that had been learned years before in school than upon what even a youngster of nineteen might reasonably be expected to have gained from practical experience. In short, they tested knowledge, not the ability to apply it; they endeavored to discover only what was retained of the three R's and civics, and constituted no real test of intelligence. Considering the popularity of psychological and so-called intelligence tests in the United States, it is interesting to observe that virtually no reference was made to them in the whole course of the Swiss discussion.

The heaviest guns of the opposition were directed against the employment of statistics based upon recruit examinations to indicate the relative educational standing of various cantons. Here, again, in all likelihood states' rights sentiment expressed itself in sublimated form. It was asserted with some weight of authority, however, that, considering the enormous mass of recruits to be examined annually and the extreme difficulty of uniform administration, comparisons based upon grades attained in various sections of the country were highly misleading.[43] Logically, this argument could have been employed as forcefully in support of a high degree of centralization with publication of results, no matter how much they injured too susceptible cantonal egotisms. As a matter of fact, it was directed against the restoration of the examination system. In the sequel decentralization was largely successful, and statistical comparisons were barred.

---

[42] See article on "Rekrutenprüfungen und Staatsbürgerkurse" in *Der Staatsbürger,* 8. Jhrg., Nr. 20 (October 16, 1924), S. 184.

One of the most curious products of the controversy over the restoration of recruit examinations was based upon the fact that candidates who failed in them were admitted, nevertheless, to the army and later to the electorate. Why not reorganize the examinations, it was asked, and make both military service and the vote depend upon the ability to pass them? The query was consistent in that both are public duties requiring certain abilities, and at the same time honors, which should not fall to the unworthy. One suspects, however, that the point was raised not with entire candor but rather with the purpose of preventing the re-establishment of recruit examinations. Certainly it is difficult to imagine any political party or realistic politician, even in Switzerland, backing a proposal to make suffrage depend upon the passing of a pedagogical test. In any event, it would require the revision of Article 43 of the federal constitution.[44]

As the foregoing résumé perhaps sufficiently shows, opinion in Switzerland regarding the restoration of recruit examinations was widely divided. Even among the teachers of the country, opposition was strong. In 1920 a majority of the delegate assembly of the Swiss Teachers' Association voted against them. On the other hand, many of the strongest supporters of the examination system were teachers thoroughly familiar with its operation prior to 1914. Among army officers also, widely varying views prevailed. In general, however, they were inclined to believe in the utility of the tests for military purposes. With equal strength, however, they were opposed to the restoration of the system in an emasculated form because the cost of such a system, although wholly valueless for their purposes, would still be saddled upon the military budget.

---

[43] Two articles signed "E. Sp." urge this consideration with great force. They were published in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung,* morning edition No. 2263 of December 29, 1927, and evening edition No. 938 of May 22, 1928.

[44] Article 43 provides in part: "Every citizen of a canton is a Swiss citizen. As such he may participate, in the place where he is domiciled, in all federal elections and popular votes, after having duly proven his qualification as a voter."

After nine years of argument the matter reached a new stage October 7, 1927, with the submission of a report by the Federal Council to the legislative bodies. Basing its recommendations upon the findings of the expert commission of 1924 and of the Military Department, the Federal Council proposed the restoration of the examinations in modified form to take effect if possible in 1929. Under the new plan pedagogic tests are to be restricted to civics and essay-writing. In case a candidate does badly with the latter, he may be examined in reading. Arithmetic is dropped, the assumption being that recruits who were obliged to leave school at an early age have been sufficiently trained in that subject by the continuation school. To meet the arguments of those who objected to comparisons between cantonal school standards based on the results of recruit examinations, the Federal Council proposes that in the future no statistics permitting such comparisons shall be published. On the other hand, results may be presented with reference to occupational groups, and findings related to them may be given to the public. Marks attained in the pedagogical examinations are not, however, as in the past, to be entered in the service record book of the recruit. On the other hand, gymnastic examinations are to continue as before, and the grade made in them is to be so entered.[45] Finally, each canton is to choose two experts, who, together with one other appointed by the federal government, are to have charge of the conduct of the examinations within its territory.

The proposals of the Federal Council represent a compromise and, like most compromises, have received plentiful criticism from both sides. What the Federal Assembly will do with the proposals remains to be seen; also, which is more to the purpose, what the people will do with them, for after the volume of controversy which the question has evoked it is almost certain to be subjected finally to a referendum vote.[46] If in the end the views of the Federal Council are accepted, the new system of recruit examinations will obviously be much weaker than the old. How much further it may be weakened by the two-thirds control reserved to the cantons is problematical.

---

[45] Three performances are required in the gymnastic examination: 80-meter dash; broad jump with run; and dumb-bell swinging, right and left. For details regarding methods and results, the reader may consult Major J. J. Müller-Cramer, "Die Prüfung der Stellungspflichtigen auf ihre körperliche Leistungsfähigkeit" in *Der Staatsbürger,* 8. Jhrg., Nr. 16 (August 16, 1924), S. 152. From the professorial point of view, there is a certain melancholy significance in the fact that the physical tests came through the controversy unchanged, whereas the widest possible difference of opinion developed on every pedagogical question involved.

[46] As these pages are being prepared for the press, news reports state that the proposals of the Federal Council were defeated in the National Council by a vote of 104 to 43. The Independent Democrats alone supported the measure, all the other

The whole episode of recruit examinations is something that could happen only in Switzerland. It is redolent of the profound belief of the people of that country in education. The interest—nay, the anxiety—which they feel regarding the intellectual qualifications of young citizens is *sui generis.* In other countries, even in the United States, a ghastly amount of sentimental tosh is expended on first-voters but surprisingly little is ever done for them. In Switzerland perhaps too much was done from 1875 to 1914. On the other hand, it is apparent that even there the old system of recruit examinations was not severe enough to make satisfactory headway against the predominant interests of young men approaching nineteen—sex, sport, getting a start in life. For, when all is said and done, the first voter, whether in Switzerland or elsewhere, is on the average markedly inferior in political knowledge and interest to voters of more mature age-groups. In any event, it is hard to believe that the weaker plan proposed by the Federal Council will be as effective as the former system in vogue from 1875 to 1914. Swiss youth, by common report, which, however, is usually too pessimistic in such matters, is not so deeply interested in public questions as the youth of earlier generations. Nor, judging by the opposition developed during the recent controversy, is Swiss middle and old age so fully determined as formerly to subject the coming generation to a thoroughgoing examination system. Still, the proposed plan, greatly weakened as it is, will, if put into effect, be the most sweeping educational survey of youth conducted by any nation. More than any other people, the Swiss, albeit with some backsliding from time to time, still believe in their hearts with Father Pestalozzi that "*ohne politische Erziehung ist das souveräne Volk ein Kind, das mit dem Feuer spielt und jeden Augenblick das Haus in Gefahr setzt.*"[47]

---

parties deciding against it in caucus. For comment, see *Der Staatsbürger,* 13. Jhrg., Nr. 6 (March 16, 1929), S. 46. Of course, the Council of States may decide to keep the matter alive and force the National Council to reconsider it.

[47] "Without political education the sovereign people is a child that plays with fire and puts the house in danger every instant." Cf. *Der Staatsbürger,* 11. Jhrg., Nr. 15 (August 1, 1927).

CHAPTER VII

SWISS SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL TEACHERS

SCHOOLS

The Swiss are accustomed to hear the praises of their country sung by foreign observers as the classic land of democracy and education. Not without grave misgivings on their part, however. As to the antiquity and completeness of Swiss democracy, no question can be raised; nor, indeed, as to its general acceptance by the people. At home, however, the chorus on that theme is not one of joyous and unrelieved praise by any means; on the contrary, there are questioning chords of doubt, minor interludes of apprehension for the future.

Similarly with regard to the Swiss system of education. How can it be otherwise than excellent, say foreign observers, since it owes its inspiration to Rousseau and Pestalozzi, who are known to all the world, and is the careful handiwork of Sulzer, Iselin, Potterat, Chavannes, Stapfer, Planta, De Salis, Père Girard, De Fellenberg, Wehrli, Naville, Gauthey, Gindroz, De Guimps, and a host of other theorists, reformers, teachers, and school administrators known to students of pedagogy and revered by the Swiss nationally or at least in those cantons to the schools of which they gave prominence and new usefulness.[1] Moreover, so far as the existing educational system is concerned, its democratic inclusiveness and solid virtues are admitted everywhere, and utilized to the utmost by the people themselves. Nevertheless, domestic criticism of the schools is constant and insistent.

No doubt the sharp contrast between the viewpoints of foreigners and citizens on two topics of such importance is due largely to the fact that visitors measure Swiss conditions by those prevailing in their own countries, where, as a rule, neither democracy nor education are so highly developed; whereas the Swiss themselves, implicitly and more or less unconsciously, measure what they have accomplished by ideals of a perfect democratic and educational system. What is most peculiar in their attitude is the extent to which they relate the two topics. Everywhere in democratic countries there is an immense amount of oratory and writing, much of it to be taken in a purely Pickwickian sense, on the necessity of thorough schooling to train future citizens for the performance of the manifold and onerous duties imposed upon them by the state. Among the Swiss, however, there can be no doubt as to the entire, perhaps even exaggerated, seriousness of all such utterances. Without reservation they quote and accept one of Gladstone's statements to the effect that "the state must educate its rulers." Seldom does the discussion of any political evil which arises among them proceed to any length without frequent and insistent assertions that it is due to faults in the school system of the country and is to be cured radically only by improvement of the latter. Usually a schedule indicating all details of the needed educational reforms is appended.

---

[1] An excellent brief account of the history of education in Switzerland, with particular reference to the Romance section of the country, is given by François Guex, *Histoire de l'instruction et de l'éducation* (Lausanne: Payot, 1906), pp. 653–724.

It would be easy to illustrate the foregoing considerations from any period of Swiss history since the time of Alfred Stapfer, minister of arts and sciences under the Helvetic republic (1789–1803) and prophet of a national public and normal school system. Unfortunately, his well-digested plans could not be carried out owing to the unsettlement and financial need of the times. Reaction followed, and it was not until the Regeneration period of the thirties that cantons and communes set to work in earnest to provide public schools. Particular interest was manifested in the subject also following the revision of the federal constitution in 1874, when it was generally recognized that extension of the initiative and referendum made sweeping improvement in the education of the people necessary to the future success of democracy in the country. According to Article 27 of the revised document, the cantons were charged with the duty of maintaining satisfactory primary instruction, which was to be compulsory, without charge in public schools, and exclusively under state control. Under this provision attendance was required from the sixth or seventh to the fourteenth or fifteenth year of age.

Coming down to a more recent date, the Swiss of the pre-war period did accept, with some complacency, perhaps, but always with more misgiving, foreign encomiums lavished upon their achievements in democracy and education. If praised for their freedom from political corruption, it was difficult for them to cite worse domestic offenses than the fact that certain legislative commissions, which might have finished their work during the session, had not done so but had continued their labors at public expense during the vacation in some desirable mountain resort. When complimented on the absence of extravagance in public expenditure, it was difficult to find grounds for self-depreciation; but to the Swiss, as to the Scotch, economy is scarcely a virtue, rather it is taken for granted. Of course their public officials made mistakes sometimes, pushing projects farther than popular demand warranted, but not more often apparently than similar mistakes were made in private business. Outright defalcations on their part did occur, but they were extremely rare and were punished severely. Still one could always complain about the financial weight of a federal system to which was superadded that of twenty-five cantonal establishments, and view with alarm the growth of the civil service including public-school teachers, by the way.

As another instance of self-criticism, it was customary for more conscientious Swiss citizens to express grave forebodings whenever an election or referendum showed a falling-off in the vote, and to reprove their fellows gravely for lack of interest in public business, perhaps adding lamentations on the absorption in sport or pleasure of the younger generation. And moralists found much to condemn in the practice of tax-dodging, fairly common, one must conclude, in parts of Switzerland but nowhere else so strongly reprobated. Thus, when the people of Appenzell-Exterior, assembled in Landsgemeinde, took the unprecedented step of refusing re-election to their Landamman—presumably because he believed in enforcing tax laws without fear or favor, the incident was condemned and deplored throughout the country.[2]

One special ground for despairing of their country and blaming its impending ruin on the schools was furnished the Swiss annually by the publication of the results of the recruit examinations. As a matter of fact, these tests, which from 1875 to 1914 were applied to the entire male youth of the country at the age of nineteen, showed marked improvement in the standards of popular education during that period. Nevertheless, the more patriotically minded Swiss complained that the marks made in one subject—and that the most important of all from their point of view, namely civics—were not so favorable as those made in other subjects; that, in fact, they were much lower than they should be in a country which left so many important matters to the decision of the electorate. Cases of recruits who showed an abysmal ignorance of the history and constitution of the country were constantly being commented upon with expressions little short of horror. It will be recalled that soon after the entrance of the United States into the World War alarming reports were prevalent with regard to the large percentage of morons discovered by means of so-called "intelligence" tests among our enlisted men. Some disquietude was expressed at the time over the effect of their presence in the future electorate of the country; but now that the alleged morons who escaped the fire of the enemy have returned to take their place in American life, including, it may be assumed, the regular thrusting of their tickets into the ballot box at all elections, the subject is scarcely mentioned outside psychological seminars. Among the Swiss the case was different, primarily because they were reminded every year of the educational deficiencies, especially in civics, of a certain percentage of their young men, all of them soon to be added to the electorate. It differed also in the further particular that the tests imposed were not psychological but were based on regular school subjects. As a consequence, our horrific fear of morons, who by definition are not only uneducated but within limits uneducable, was spared the Swiss. Since the deficiencies annually revealed to them by recruit examinations were not in the supposedly unchangeable gray matter of the brain but in simple school studies—reading, writing, arithmetic, and civics—they remained confident that by educational reforms the whole problem could be solved.

---

[2] It occurred at the Landsgemeinde held at Hundwil in 1921. Cf. *Der Staatsbürger,* 5. Jhrg., Nr. 10, 11, 12 (May 16, June 1 and 16, 1921). S. 80, 85, 96.

Largely shared by the more intelligent Swiss, the foregoing state of mind—a combination of diffidence when praised by foreigners, of apprehension for the future of their democracy, and of the conviction that civic education must be taken in hand vigorously to preserve it—was enormously strengthened by the repercussion of the World War upon the country. Patriotic citizens were appalled at the gulf which opened up between the Teutonic and Romance language sections and at the passionate espousal by each of the cause of that one of the warring coalitions most nearly allied to it in speech, customs, and geographic propinquity. "In heaven's name," such citizens inquired, "what has become of the sense of national unity, of the spirit of the ancient confederates, the spirit of 'one for all, all for one,' of the centuries-old devotion to a policy of neutrality?" Toward the end of the World War the country found itself menaced by an outburst of class hatred, the like of which had not been known for two generations, culminating in the revolutionary general strike of 1918. A certain enthusiasm for radical action manifested at the time by various organizations of young men was felt to be a particularly dangerous symptom. Obviously, there was something rotten in Denmark; but instead of following Hamlet's course of indecision, many leaders of Swiss thought reached the characteristic determination that the people must be educated forthwith out of the possibility of again committing such grave political errors.

More than three years before the general strike broke out, point and and direction was given to their determination by the famous Wettstein motion. Introduced into the Council of States by the distinguished member of that name from Zürich, it was carried unanimously, save for one vote, on June 17, 1915. "The Federal Council," it read, "is invited to investigate the methods by which the federation can promote the civic education and training of Swiss youth, and to bring in a report and bill on the subject."[3] Simple as the Wettstein motion was, it aroused an enormous interest throughout the country. One writer described it not inaptly as the falling stone which loosed an avalanche, and within a short time "Civic Education" *(staatsbürgerliche Erziehung)* became a veritable political slogan, with all that that term implies, both bad and good.

Immediately upon its passage the Wettstein motion was adopted by the Federal Council and referred for detailed study to the Department of the Interior. The latter called to its assistance representatives of the public schools, the general continuation schools, the secondary schools *(Mittelschulen)*, and the universities. Professional bodies composed of teachers of all the foregoing categories took up the discussion of civic education; and a flood of pamphlets, of articles in educational periodicals and the daily press, of addresses delivered before such patriotic organizations as the New Helvetic Society and the Association for Civic Education descended upon the land. In one case, at least, the topic was made the principal theme of discussion at a party diet.[4]

One lengthy resolution of major importance in this connection was adopted by the conference of cantonal educational directors at an extraordinary meeting held May 30 and 31, 1916.[5] According to this resolution,

> The civic education of youth should arouse patriotic and social sentiment and should permeate the whole instruction. Its purpose is to form the re-

---

[3] The general condition of civic education in Switzerland shortly prior to the Wettstein motion is summed up briefly in the extended systematic treatise by A. Messer, *Das Problem der Staatsbürgerlichen Erziehung* (Leipzig: Nemnich, 1912), pp. 230–38. The late A. Barth of Basel, probably the greatest Swiss authority on the middle school, published a study on the subject under the title *Staatsbürgerliche Erziehung* (Schaffhaussen: Bolli, 1911).

[4] Namely, at the diet of the Independent Democratic *(Freisinnige-demokratische)* party, held at Biel in 1913.

[5] It is quoted in full in an article entitled "Zur Motion Wettstein," which appeared in *Der Staatsbürger*, 8. Jhrg., Nr. 5 (March 1, 1924), S. 38. Swiss cantonal educational directors perform duties roughly similar to those of state superintendents of public instruction in the United States.

publican Swiss citizen, to inform him not only regarding his rights but also regarding his duties to the fatherland, to familiarize him with the political organization of our country and the spirit of our institutions, and to convince him of the necessity of co-operating toward the unity of the nation and the fulfilment of social and civilizing duties. With all due emphasis upon the rights and liberties of the individual, it should, nevertheless, enforce the necessity of opposing the selfishness of individuals and of organizations so far as such selfishness endangers the welfare of all or of major portions of the whole.

Following this rather idealistic statement of the ends to be pursued, the resolution of the cantonal educational directors endeavored to lay down in six theses the outlines of further development in civic education. Perhaps the most popular of the suggestions made by them was that the federal government should subsidize normal-school courses given under local auspices to train teachers specifically for the new types of instruction. Careful effort was manifested throughout the document to avoid giving offense to the states' rights element, one clause reading: "The organization, conduct, and supervision of civic instruction is a cantonal matter (federal constitution, Arts. 27, 27*bis*)"; and another: "No statutory change conferring greater power upon the federal government in the educational field is necessary." There is perhaps further evidence of caution, particularly as regards the church, in the statement that "while the duty of imparting civic instruction devolves in the first instance upon the teacher, it is the duty also of the family, of ministers of all confessions, of civil and military authorities, and of the press." Finally the resolution adopts a conciliatory attitude toward criticism from the left, holding that

> it is not to be concealed that all the proposed efforts [in the field of civic education] will be crowned with success only if they undertake at the same time to remove the difficulties placed in the way by social need. The struggle against the material and moral causes of the latter supports materially the civic education of the masses.

As the resolution of the cantonal educational directors indicates, the Wettstein motion was already beginning to meet opposition. A federal resolution, announced in a message of December 3, 1917, empowering the government at Bern to subsidize teacher-training courses in civics, remained in the ministerial desk. The revolutionary general strike movement of 1918, and other pressing practical issues which followed it, drew public attention away from school reform. Moreover, as national unity appeared to be largely restored from 1920 on, interest in the subject of civic education became less intense. Indeed, certain critics of the Wettstein motion began to say that, after all, it was merely the manifestation of a war psychosis and could just as well be dropped, now that normalcy had been re-established. The observation was not entirely accurate, however, for, if any psychosis be involved, it is one from which the Swiss suffer in peace as well as in war time. To a considerable extent also it is true that the slogan "Civic Education" was appropriated by the Independent Democratic *(Freisinnige-demokratische)* party, the members of which, as will be shown later, were particularly active in the establishment of voluntary civics courses in several cities of Eastern Switzerland. Certain it is that, whenever efforts were made to secure action on the Wettstein motion, leaders of other parties and factions were always able to bring enough pressure to bear upon the Federal Council to keep the matter in cold storage.

Chief among the political groups opposed to federal action on civic education was the Catholic Conservative party. Its members are passionately devoted to cantonal autonomy in education since it enables them to control their own schools and thus to maintain their religious and cultural interests free from outside interference. Speaking at the diet of the party held in 1916 at Luzern, Dr. Beck of Freiburg declared the Wettstein motion to be hostile to religion, asserting, further, that it sacrificed the fundamentally religious concept of the school, and that, if put into execution, it would lead to a *Kulturkampf*. In these assertions he was supported by the Bishop of Chur. There can be no doubt as to the strength of Catholic antipathy to any uniform system of civic education in Switzerland; it survived the controversy on that immediate subject in the form of a personal dislike of Dr. Wettstein which was one of the main reasons for the defeat of his candidacy for the Federal Council in December, 1929.

Socialists joined with Catholic Conservatives in opposition to the Wettstein motion. Leaders of that party maintained that the whole propaganda for civic education was due to terror on the part of the capitalists at the success with which the Social Democratic party had organized the youth of the laboring masses. What the capitalists really intended was to enlist the federal government in a campaign for compulsory civic instruction which, while ostensibly non-partisan, would subtly inoculate the children of all social classes, including the laboring class, with a conservative habit of thought.[6]

[6] Ernst Reinhardt presents the Socialist side of the question strongly and with abundant sarcasm in a pamphlet entitled *Der bürgerliche Staatsunterricht* (Olten: Verlag Trösch, 1917).

Neither the Catholic Conservatives nor the Social Democrats objected in principle to civic education; indeed, a few leaders of the latter party thought it quite in accordance with Socialist doctrine; moreover, they agreed that, with certain safeguards to protect their own interests, it should be given in the schools. Nevertheless, the clericals fought federal action strenuously because without it they could handle the subject to suit themselves in the cantons they control, whereas the Social Democrats fought it because, not being able to control civic instruction to the advantage of their own party, they did not choose that it should redound to the advantage of any other party.

In addition to the antagonism of the two political parties just mentioned, the Wettstein motion was attacked also by the states' rights element in Western Switzerland and in the canton of Graubünden. It will be recalled that the central authorities were defeated decisively in 1882 on a measure providing for a federal secretary of education.[7] According to the opposition, this proposal was designed as the first step in a campaign to destroy cantonal autonomy in the public-school field. Politicians have never forgotten the setback of 1882; and it is not at all strange that so formidable a political combination against the Wettstein motion, aided by increasing popular apathy on the subject, succeeded in staving off action by the authorities in Bern for nearly nine years. On February 4, 1924, the motion was virtually buried by decision of the Federal Council, concurred in by the original mover, with the proviso, however, that the executive would continue to keep the matter in mind and would promote all suitable measures for realizing its purposes.

So far as definite action in the near future is concerned, it is doubtful if the proviso accepted by the Federal Council amounts to anything more than a pious hope. Nothing short of a scare such as that caused by the World War would suffice to break the political deadlock against any centralized educational policy. It would be hasty to conclude, however, that the eight or nine years devoted to discussion of the Wettstein motion were wholly fruitless. The University of Zürich has

[7] The vote was 172,010 for and 318,139 against. In 1902 a constitutional amendment was adopted by a popular vote of 258,561 to 80,429, all but one-half canton also being favorable, which graciously permitted the federal government to subsidize primary education throughout the country. But, in order that there might not be the slightest possible doubt on the matter, the amendment expressly stated that "the organization, direction, and supervision of the primary schools shall remain within the competence of the cantons," a formula which apparently has since been regarded as axiomatic in Swiss politics. By the law of June 25, 1903, the federal government pays a yearly school subsidy amounting to 60 centimes per capita of the population, which is increased to 80 centimes in eight mountain cantons, owing to the special difficulties due to their situation.

opened its doors to civic instruction, and greater attention is being devoted to cognate fields by other Swiss institutions of higher learning. While the courses offered are of distinguished excellence, they are few in number as compared with those given in American universities of equal rank. Also, a considerable measure of success has been attained by the voluntary civics courses, which are to be discussed in some detail later.[8] Established three years prior to the Wettstein motion, they owe much of the impetus subsequently given them by the discussion which it provoked. Further, there can be no doubt that the output from 1916 to 1929 of literature on civic education in the form of innumerable pamphlets and special articles contributed to educational journals and newspapers has materially influenced the views of teachers and their methods of instruction.

While not directly related to the movement for civic education, the People's Universities *(Volkshochschulen)*, the most successful of which was established in Zürich in 1920, offer extension lectures in law and economics among other subjects.[9] In general the movement for adult education does not seem to have progressed as far in Switzerland as in some of the North European countries. Nevertheless, there are summer schools, summer camps, and vacation groups combining recreation and instruction, women's clubs, literary societies, reading-circles, lecture societies, and so on without end. The numerous educational activities carried on by political parties are described elsewhere.[10] A network of charitable societies *(Wohltätigkeitsgesellschaften)* and of public welfare societies *(Gemeinnütsigengesellschaften)* cover the country, accomplishing much good and in so doing contributing to the civic training of their members. Library facilities are excellent and on the whole well distributed. In some of the larger cities there are splendidly equipped People's Houses, which, in addition to good and moderate-priced restaurants—not always non-alcoholic, by the way—offer meeting places for organizations of many kinds, including Socialist party locals and trade-unions.

The movement for civic instruction was aimed largely at the middle schools *(Mittelschulen)* of the country. It was assumed that children in the lower grades, from six to fourteen years of age, were too immature for the direct presentation of the subject; nevertheless, as we shall have occasion to note later, foundational work of the greatest possible significance has long been carried on with more advanced classes of such children.

---

[8] See chap. x.

[9] Similar institutions exist in Basel, Bern, Neuchâtel, and Geneva. For details, cf. *Adult Education in Switzerland,* Bulletin XXI of the World Association for Adult Education (London, 1924).

[10] See chap. iv.

Just what constitutes a "middle school" in the Swiss sense is somewhat difficult to determine owing to the lack of uniformity from canton to canton. According to a distinguished authority,[11] the term includes all schools, whether specializing in humanities and languages *(Gymnasien)* or in the sciences *(Realschulen)*, which prepare for the maturity examination *(Maturitätsprüfung)*, the latter being required for entrance to the universities or to the federal Polytechnikum in Zürich. Some schools of this rank begin with pupils who have completed the fourth year of primary school work, continuing their instruction for a full eight years. More commonly, however, the middle schools permit the entrance of pupils only after the completion of the fifth or sixth year in the primary schools, and certain of them require an additional year's work or more in secondary or county schools *(Sekundar oder Bezirksschulen)*. For the most part, therefore, the forty institutions in Switzerland which rank as middle schools deal with young persons between eleven or twelve and eighteen or twenty years of age. In the Catholic middle schools, as a rule, the course is not finished until the twentieth year.

Beyond the foregoing it is difficult to generalize regarding Swiss middle schools. In the richer cantons they are large establishments, housed in palatial buildings, splendidly equipped with libraries and laboratories, and provided with adequate faculties of well-trained instructors. In the poorer cantons they are small, under-equipped and understaffed, and, wherever the Catholic church is dominant, strongly under its influence.[12] Taking them as a whole, the general effectiveness and solidity of the work they accomplish is beyond question. They are entirely under cantonal administration, the only control which the federal government possesses over them resting upon two enactments, one a law of December 19, 1877, which makes admission to federal examinations for doctors, dentists, veterinarians, and apothecaries dependent upon the possession of a maturity certificate *(Maturitätszeugnis)*; the other, an ordinance, dating, in its present form, from 1908 and fixing the requirements for admission to the federal Polytechnikum. It is conceded that the middle schools more than meet both these requirements easily; indeed, one of the commonest grounds of criticism against them is that in mutual rivalry they have overloaded their curricula to an extreme degree. A vigorous Swiss critic puts the matter as follows:

---

[11] Dr. Marcel Grossmann, *Nationale Forderungen an die schweizerische Mittelschule* (Zürich: Verlag Rascher, 1915), p. 7. It may be worth noting that the substance of this pamphlet by Dr. Grossmann, who is a professor in the federal Polytechnikum at Zürich, was delivered originally as an address before the group of the New Helvetic Society in that city. According to a broader usage than that of Dr. Grossmann, the following are sometimes referred to as middle schools: (1) the lower middle schools, often four-year county schools which carry pupils a year or two beyond the common schools, mostly in rural districts; (2) some higher girls' schools *(höhere Töchterschulen)*; (3) various higher trade, commercial, technical, and normal schools; and (4) certain industrial arts, textile, agricultural, gardening, dairy, and domestic-science schools with full courses.

[12] Of the forty middle schools in Switzerland, twelve are under Catholic influence. In the latter, as Rektor Kühne of Einsiedeln expressed it, "religious instruction is no mere matter of ornament; on the contrary, it is put at the head of the subjects of study." Professor Grossmann, *op. cit.*, p. 39, contrasts the statements of general purposes made by two institutions (one of which, the gymnasium of Basel, is Protestant; the other, the Benedictine Foundation School of Einsiedeln, Catholic) as follows: "Basel,—The Gymnasium should give its students a general humanistic ed-

> When it is considered what certain Gymnasia accomplish, one might reach the conclusion that they had no higher purpose than to exceed each other in the fulness of what they offer their students; the extreme zeal with which certain schoolmen go about their work gives an impression at times as if the Gymnasium were the last and highest school and did not have above it the university, for which it should prepare but which it should not seek to render superfluous.[13]

Another factor working to overload the curriculum has been the arrival of successive generations of young instructors fresh from the universities, each determined to make old subjects move over to make room for their own accumulations of "new learning." In this way the Swiss middle schools have been, and still are, the battle ground of epic struggles, similar to those fought out in American colleges a generation ago between the ancient classics and the modern sciences.

Now as it happened, the middle schools had been under fire on the foregoing and numerous other grounds for some years prior to the Wettstein motion, developing as a result a pronounced defense-reaction on the part of their faculties. According to the authority already cited, each school resembles

> a large ants' nest, in which many clever workers carry the future generation along artfully constructed and intricately interwoven pathways from one intellectual feeding-place to another. Under such conditions every impulse

---

ucation and prepare them for academic study"; "Einsiedeln,—The purpose of the institution is to prepare its pupils, by a moral-religious education based on the spirit of the Catholic church and also by a thorough scientific training, for a higher scientific profession."

[13] Konrad Falke, *Das demokratische Ideal und unsere nationale Erziehung* (Zürich: Rascher, 1915), p. 28.

coming from the outside is naturally regarded as a disturbance; in great excitement each worker ant seeks to rescue his treasures, be they ancient or modern or merely cantonal in character. Quickly the representatives of each subject form to defend themselves against the assaults constantly being pressed closer home by "school reformers" and "critics of things in general."[14]

It was inevitable but unfortunate that, in addition to their political, clerical, and sectional enemies, the proponents of civic education had to face the deep-rooted conservatism of the middle schools. Two alternatives were open to them: either they could suggest the creation of a new department, manned by additional instructors and preferably made compulsory upon all students, or they could divide the subject up among existing departments, history and geography taking the lion's share and modern languages contributing as largely as possible. The first alternative seemed more commensurate with the importance of the national ends they had in view; but, alas, it arrayed against them the passive, if not the active, antagonism of the teaching bodies. None of the existing departments manifested the slightest inclination to abate its own requirements; moreover, if a whole new required subject were added to the curriculum, it would have been the last straw to break the back of the middle-school student—and a far more patient, overloaded camel he is than any youth of the same age on this side of the Atlantic. Not only Swiss teachers, but Swiss parents as well, were more or less up in arms already over the federal maturity-certificate requirements, or rather over the efforts of the middle schools to outdo them.[15]

[14] Dr. Marcel Grossmann, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[15] Nevertheless, the requirements themselves were fairly stiff, particularly in languages. In any event the federal maturity certificate required (1) grammatical, stylistic, and logical command of the mother-tongue, also a knowledge of its literature; (2) reading and speaking knowledge of a second national language with some knowledge of its modern literature; (3) Latin; (4) Greek, for which may be substituted the third national language or English; (5) history and geography; (6) mathematics—algebra and geometry; (7) physics; (8) chemistry; (9) natural history—botany, zoölogy, anthropology, mineralogy, and geology; (10) free-hand drawing and sketching from nature. By an ordinance of January 25, 1925, which took effect in 1927, a larger element of choice was introduced into the system. Under this ordinance three types of middle schools, differentiated according to curriculum, are recognized, viz., the Literary Gymnasium, the Scientific Gymnasium, and the Upper Scientific School *(Literargymnasium, Realgymnasium, Oberrealschule)*, teachers being permitted to give the maturity tests and issue certificates in schools of any one of the types which present a full six-year course of study. In addition, a federal examination *(Fremden-Matur)* is given for all those candidates who have been unable to attend a middle school. Criticism has long been rife regarding the comparative ease with which foreigners were admitted to Swiss universities; undoubtedly the *Fremden-Matur* is designed to correct that condition. For special lines of study universities may accept other evidences of fitness, e.g., a maturity certificate from a commercial school.

Turning, as most of the advocates of civic education did in the end, to the second alternative, that of dividing up the subject under already existing lines of study, it avoided some of the objections to the first only to encounter others peculiar to itself. Not all the instructors of the departments to be aggrandized by it, notably history and geography and to a less degree modern languages, were altogether pleased with the plan. Like most specialists, they dealt with their subjects as ends in themselves for which the rest of the universe served merely as a background. Thoroughly satisfied with their own aims, they did not become noticeably enthusiastic even over the glowing ends proclaimed by the patriotic advocates of civic education. Moreover, if they performed their new duties in a thoroughgoing way, some means of lightening the curriculum elsewhere would have to be found, thus incurring the enmity of worthy and determined colleagues, or, if not found, then the enmity of parents and the outside community.

Unkind voices were raised in particular against the primacy which history would enjoy under the second alternative. One bold advocate of straight-out instruction in Swiss constitutional law as a middle-school subject remarked acidly that what the advocates of civic education really desired was a consciousness of the future, not of the past. He added, "We have no history over which the Swiss people as a whole may become enthusiastic," and called attention to the numerous bloody conflicts of past centuries in which certain cantons now in good standing as members of the federation found themselves arrayed against other cantons also in good federal standing at the present time.[16]

The point thus made is a very sore one, and it applies in other connections as well. In Catholic cantons, for example, both priesthood and laity stand aghast constantly at the "false teaching" about the Middle Ages and the Reformation tolerated in the schools of Protestant cantons; and of course the same feeling, reversed, exists among the followers of Zwingli and Calvin. Socialists would rewrite the whole history of the country as a series of class struggles—indeed, one of them has done so;[17] and they are determined to inject as much Marxianism as possible into the teaching of the subject in the schools. Pacifists object that there is too much of the war hero in history teaching; militarists that there is too much pacifism.

History teachers are further accused—and, considering the extremely controversial nature of their subject from the Swiss viewpoint, one cannot wholly blame them for it—of burying themselves in past epochs, safely remote from the hurly-burly of modern politics; or at least of finding it convenient to stop with the Old Confederation (1798) or the Act of Mediation (1815), leaving students ignorant of the events of 1848 and 1874 when the present constitution of the country was taking shape. Textbooks in history are criticized either as partisan or as mere statements of fact without comment or interpretation, and hence, in either case, as unfitted to train the young citizen for his future duties. Finally, to make the cup of gall and wormwood full and running over, certain Swiss pundits who had grasped the great truth that the science of economics resolves infallibly all historical questions, and, for that matter, all questions of contemporary politics as well, commented with a certain savagery upon the indifference, not to say downright ignorance, of most history teachers regarding the theory of distribution and the principles of international trade. Taken collectively and at their face value, it is apparent that the foregoing considerations demonstrate how impossible it is that history teachers could give instruction in civics to the satisfaction of anyone but themselves. Nevertheless, it is certain that they are not inferior to their middle-school colleagues in general professional training and success.

---

[16] Cf. p. 7 of the pamphlet by Dr. Emil Huber, professor in the cantonal commercial school, Zürich, on *Der verfassungsrechtliche Unterricht an der Mittelschule* (Zürich: Füssli, 1916).

[17] Robert Grimm, *Geschichte der Schweiz in ihren Klassenkämpfen* (Bern: Verlag Unionsdruckerei, 1920).

When one turns to the part played by language instruction in civic education, it is pleasant to observe that, unlike history, it seems little involved in controversy. Undoubtedly teachers in this field have made and are making a large contribution to national understanding and unity. Of course, they are in a peculiarly favorable position to do so in a country speaking three languages and dialects innumerable. One is struck by the difference between Swiss nomenclature and our own on the subject. In referring to German, French, and Italian, we speak of "modern foreign languages," conveying, it is to be feared, some suggestion of the exotic or difficult and even of inferiority, by the term "foreign." To the Swiss one of these is his mother-tongue *(Muttersprache,* according to the federal maturity program), just as English is to us; but the other two are not foreign, instead they are the second and third national languages *(zweite und dritte Landessprachen).* With masses of fellow-citizens who speak one or the other of these tongues living only a short distance away, with tourists who speak them constantly in their midst, and with the natural desire of youth to travel abroad, a desire which may be gratified at so little cost in money and time, it is a matter of no difficulty at all to convince Swiss middle-school students of the cultural and social desirability of modern-language study. So far as the young American of the same age is concerned, all these factors are lacking or greatly attenuated—hence his flaccid interest or active opposition to high-school requirements in French and German. Last but not least, Swiss of all social classes, including workmen and servants who never advance beyond the primary grades, are abundantly convinced of the direct economic value of a command of modern languages.[18]

In any event, it is certain that the results attained in language study by the middle schools put to shame not only American high schools but American colleges, universities, and graduate schools as well. Even at an age from four to seven years more advanced, American students experience something like shell shock at the mere thought of a reading-knowledge requirement in two foreign languages. At eighteen the young Swiss meets a maturity test involving a reading and speaking knowledge of one modern language other than his mother-tongue, a reading knowledge of Latin, and a reading knowledge of Greek, the only substitution permitted being that of the third national language or of English for the Greek.

As if all this were not enough, some enthusiasts for civic education advocate the absolute requirement of all three national languages for the maturity certificate, each to be given exactly the same number of hours of school instruction.[19] In their opinion every Swiss who contemplates university study and professional life should be master of German, French, and Italian. One wonders, however, whether, in so overloading the middle-school student, he might not be led to ponder over the burdens of 100 per cent patriotism in a country which happens to have no fewer than three national languages. Certainly, if the suggestion were adopted, some of the excess Greek or Latin should be thrown overboard.

Judging from the professional literature on the subject, modern languages are taught in Switzerland with an insight and skill which, taken in connection with the factors mentioned above, goes far to explain the extraordinary results obtained and the importance attached to them by advocates of civic education.[20] A large share of attention is given to the principal periods of literary history, which are discussed in their relations to contemporary social and political conditions, thus furnishing a valuable supplement to the courses in history proper.

---

[18] In the Engadine, Canton Graubünden, the writer encountered clerks in country stores and waitresses in village restaurants who spoke, fluently enough for practical purposes, Romansch, Italian, German, French, and English. The first of these was their mother-tongue. Italian, which is closely related to it, and German, which is of a widely different language stock, they had learned in the public school; French, by obtaining positions in the Romance section of the country; and English, by taking service with families of that nationality sojourning in Switzerland.

[19] Cf., on this point, G. Bohnenblust, *Vaterländische Erziehung* (Zürich: Füssli, 1915), p. 20.

One might assume that the study of German, French, and Italian in each of these language sections would prove a two-edged sword, attracting the Swiss student away from, as much as toward, his own country. The centrifugal tendency in each of the three cases is counteracted in part, however, by the requirement of a second and a possible third national language. Moreover, Swiss language teachers distinguish sharply between the culture and the political organization of other nations the languages of which are spoken in their own country and taught in their own schools. For the foreign culture which happens to be involved they manifest the greatest sympathy; for any excesses of the chauvinistic spirit accompanying it abroad, none at all. German and fatherland, for example, may mean the same thing in Germany, but they mean two separate things in Switzerland. Max Zollinger writes

> It would not occur to any Swiss teacher of German to see with Franz Schnass that in Schiller's poetry "the German nature is free, deeply religious and sincere, as marked off from English hypocrisy (Maria Stuart), French irony (Jungfrau von Orleans), and Russian violence (Demetrius)"; or to accept as the distinguishing mark of German character "the continual overthrow of the erotic by the Faustian man as it is so powerfully revealed by Goethe."

Commenting on the same difficulty, Fritz Hunziker observes that the Swiss teacher of German

> must build bridges leading to our northern neighbor, and he must guide the pupil along certain routes through sharply defined intellectual territories with this neighbor. But he must watch anxiously lest the limits of these territories be overstepped; lest he himself, because of his close touch with these territories, accept German intellectual sympathies in general and transmit them to the pupil. . . . . And if the pupil develops such sympathies, his whole power of withstanding a political culture that never can be ours will be weakened. It is at this point particularly that the Swiss teacher of Ger-

---

[20] For excellent discussions, cf. Max Zollinger, "Die Aufgabe des Deutschunterrichts in der deutschen Schweiz," and Leopold Gauthier, "Der Deutschunterricht auf den Mittelschulen der französischen Schweiz," pp. 446, 459, in *Zeitschrift für Deutschkunde,* 1927, No. 6; also Fritz Hunziker, "Deutschunterricht und vaterländische Erziehung in der Mittelschule," which appeared in the *Schweizerischen Lehrer-Zeitung,* 1917, Nos. 26–29, inc., and was also reprinted as a pamphlet by the Verlag Füssli, Zürich.

man must see quite clearly; he must mark for himself—perhaps only at the cost of bitter struggles, but he must mark it—a dividing line, and see to it that it is never bridged over. That is a difficult task for a Swiss, above all for a German Swiss; for a foreigner it is quite impossible, and the consequence to be drawn from the latter point with regard to appointments to positions as teachers of German [in Switzerland] is obvious.[21]

While accepting all the treasures of German, French, and Italian literatures as their own, therefore, Swiss instructors in these subjects naturally emphasize fully the part played by their own countrymen in the development of each. Jeremias Gotthelf, Gottfried Keller, and Karl Ferdinand Meyer, for example, are by no means unknown beyond the Rhine, but they loom much larger on the Alpine side of that river. To an even greater extent instructors lay emphasis upon the works of the large number of more recent Swiss writers, whether German, French, or Italian happens to be their medium of expression. No hard and fast list of required reading prevails in the schools, and as a result the teacher is free to present his own favorites to his heart's content. From books read in language courses much of value from the point of view of civics is gleaned—sagas and folk tales, historical pictures, descriptions of contemporary life and morals, and not a little direct political exhortation, as, for example, in Keller's *Frau Regel Amrain und ihr Jüngster*.

Still another particular in which Swiss language teaching differentiates itself from the methods prevailing in its greater neighbors is in the emphasis laid upon the study of dialect and of works written in dialect. In the Romance section, where old local forms of speech are dying out rapidly, not so much work of this character is done; but in the German section, where they are the living medium of everyday communication, it occupies a large share of the attention of language teachers. One often hears the phrase among them: "the two-language condition within our mother-tongue" *(die Zwiesprachigkeit innerhalb der Muttersprache)*; and the fact is, although it is little mentioned outside Switzerland, that children of the German-speaking cantons enter the public school knowing and speaking the local dialect only. In a very real sense therefore, it, and not German as spoken in the Empire, is their mother-tongue. During the first years of primary school the local dialect is used in the classroom. Later the pupil must be educated out of it into the general German tongue, and in the process he encounters not a few of the difficulties presented by the study of any foreign language. What is a fetter to him at first, however, becomes an advantage and a joy in after life. He understands standard German better because of the innumerable comparisons possible between it and his local dialect. If his language studies are extended to include Middle High German, he is struck with the many close resemblances between it and his own *Schwyzerdütsch*, and is likely to take a greater pride in the latter. Inhabitants of the Bernese Oberland, it is said, speak the language of the *Niebelungen* and are able to read medieval German texts with ease. Even without excursions into the higher philology, your everyday Swiss citizen derives an enormous amount of homely satisfaction from the use of dialect; he enjoys a joke, a song, a story, or a conversation in it immensely more than in the—as he regards it—precise, dressed-up, and somewhat supercilious German. The local tongue is something peculiarly his own, a national characteristic that sets him off from a German of the *Reich;* and he is not above taking a slightly malicious pleasure in using it so that the latter cannot follow what is being said. At the same time, the local dialect is the very breath of life of his "narrower fatherland," the canton. In cultivating it, therefore, the Swiss schools perform a service greatly appreciated by the people and of real importance in forming their peculiar national character.

---

[21] *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

While the middle school has been for years past the chosen battle ground on which enthusiasts for civic training and reformers generally have met their adversaries, it is not by any means the only institution of importance in the Swiss educational scheme. From the point of view of enrolment, it falls far behind the primary school, figures for the year 1927–28 showing the enormous total of 473,865 pupils, almost equally divided between the sexes, in the latter; whereas in the superior secondary schools, whether leading to the university or not, the total was only 16,944, nearly four-fifths of whom were young men.[22] Reports for the year 1928 show that among the regular students in the seven universities of the country men outnumbered women more than five to one.[23] What these figures indicate is that Switzerland, with all its profound belief in education, is not yet rich enough to have witnessed anything comparable to the rush of boys and girls of all social classes to the high schools and later to the colleges and

[22] There were in the inferior secondary schools 48,579 pupils, among whom boys predominated slightly. Figures are quoted from the *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1928.*

[23] The total number of regularly matriculated university students for 1928 was 6,599, of whom 974 were women. In addition, there were 1,278 auditors, making the total of university attendance 7,877.

universities of the United States; indeed, there has been a decline in the number of university matriculations since 1913.[24]

One reason for the acute interest manifested by reformers in the middle school is the fact that the students enrolled in it are taking the first and essential step in higher education necessary to professional practice and leadership in many other walks of life. Not that they are, *in toto*, a youthful aristocracy of brains; on the contrary, as radicals often point out with no small bitterness, the step upward can be taken only by young men and women whose parents are able to support them during the six or seven additional years of study.

For the youth of the country who are compelled to give up formal educational training with the completion of the common school, a great work is accomplished by general continuation schools, which in 1928 existed in all but five cantons, enrolling 33,252 pupils. In addition to the general continuation schools, Switzerland is particularly fortunate in the possession of a large number of advanced continuation schools which train students for various specialized bread-and-butter pursuits. All told, there were 1,191 institutions of the latter character in 1924, of which 600 were devoted to domestic science, 354 to industry, 137 to commerce, and 100 to agriculture. From the federal government they received subsidies totaling 2,360,567 francs, or slightly less than the amount granted by it in aid of primary schools. The number of students enrolled in such special continuation schools had reached a total of 106,518 in 1928, of whom nearly a third were young women attracted by courses in domestic science. For the development of instruction in the latter field, a large share of credit is due a women's organization for general welfare, the Schweizerische Gemeinnützige Frauenverein. Numerous excellent schools of advanced character train specifically for various branches of commerce, transportation, general technology, metal industries, art industries, watch-making, textiles, wood-carving, pottery-making, and agriculture.

It is the particular purpose of the Swiss continuation schools to produce citizens capable of supporting themselves and contributing to the economic life of the nation. In the expressive phrase which is often used in that country, they aim to produce "quality workmen." For those who can afford it the effort is carried further by advanced technical institutions, which take students of middle-school age for from three to four and a half years, preparing them for managerial positions.

---

[24] The total number of regularly matriculated students in the seven Swiss universities was 7,088 in 1913, as compared with 6,599 in 1928.

Undoubtedly, a high degree of success is attained by all these schools of practical arts. Indeed, complaint is sometimes made that they are too successful, turning out not only more quality workmen but also more quality foremen, supervisors, and executives than the business life of Switzerland can absorb, thus contributing to the volume of emigration and the consequent loss of some of the best-trained talent of the country.

A distinguished American scholar, Professor Mark Jefferson, published recently a study of the geographic distribution of inventiveness,[25] devoting particular attention to statistics showing the number of patents granted in 1925 by the principal nations of the world to other than their own citizens. On this basis the Swiss achieve a rating which places them in a class by themselves; all patent offices reporting them as the foremost inventors relative to population. "Switzerland," to quote Professor Jefferson, "has 930 patents granted her inventors to every million Swiss people, while the other leading nations have but 200 to 300."[26] The detailed figures on which the foregoing statement is based do not take into account (in all probability it would be impossible to do so) the relative importance, basic or otherwise, of inventions for which patents are granted. Unquestionably many of them are petty devices of no great originality but nevertheless of sufficient commercial value to warrant application for patent rights abroad. Probably, also, the tendency to make such applications is much stronger among citizens of a country like Switzerland, which has a very small home market, than in larger countries. With all due allowance, however, the figures quoted above show the Swiss so far in the lead of other peoples that one must perforce concede them to be inventive to an extreme degree. Professor Jefferson explains this national trait as due in part to religious persecutions in neighboring great states during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which drove thousands of intelligent men, many of whom were skilled workers, into Switzerland. Huguenots, for example, founded the watch business of Geneva and the silk industries of Bern and Zürich. Unquestionably, Swiss industry was enormously quickened at the time by

[25] In the *Geographical Review,* XIX (October, 1929), 649.

[26] Various countries are rated as follows according to the number of patents granted abroad to their residents per million population: Switzerland, 930; Sweden, 299; Austria, 298; Germany, 271; France, 195; United Kingdom, 188; United States, 160. Switzerland also grants more patents to its own citizens relative to population than any other country, the figures for 1925 being, per million inhabitants, as follows: Switzerland, 542; United States, 382; Belgium (1927), 283; France, 264; Austria, 239; United Kingdom, 191; Germany, 186.

the splendid human material thus added to the population. On the other hand, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are now so remote that events occurring during them should be used with extreme caution in attempting to explain contemporary economic phenomena. On the whole, it seems much more probable that the high degree of inventiveness possessed by the Swiss of today is due in large measure to the excellent educational system of the country, particularly to the highly practical character of the instruction given by the innumerable trade and industrial schools referred to above.

Advocates of civic education are only slightly less interested in the continuation schools than in the middle school, desiring that, in addition to the extremely practical matters taught in the former, more instruction be given by way of preparation for the recruit examinations at nineteen or twenty and for the exercise of the right of suffrage a year or so later. They hail with delight the establishment of new continuation schools and favor requirements, such as exist now in several cantons, that attendance in them be made compulsory upon certain classes of children for one, two, or three years. Also, they criticize severely the cantons which, excusing themselves on the ground of poverty, have so far failed to provide such schools, thus permitting large numbers of their young people to drift educationally from eleven or twelve years of age onward until they are old enough to vote. Prior to the industrial era, of course, boys were taken care of by apprenticeship; but at present complaint is made that, taking the country as a whole, there must be large numbers of youngsters who are left largely to their own devices during nine or ten plastic years which, properly improved, would make them much better wage-earners and citizens.[27]

If, as noted above, the middle school lays claim to represent the future leadership of the country, it may be asserted with much clearer right that the great common school represents its democracy. Of no country, indeed, may the latter assertion be made with more assurance; and as a matter of fact, it is made frequently and with pardonable pride by the Swiss themselves, who otherwise are given more to depreciation than to praise of their institutions. What they are ac-

[27] In an address delivered before the Swiss teachers' diet *(Lehrertag)* at Basel, October 2d, 1911, which attracted wide attention at the time and was later reprinted as a pamphlet under the title *Staatsbürgerliche Erziehung* (Basel: Helbing), R. Luginbühl proposed to meet this situation by the organization of Youth Leagues composed of all the boys of a commune or city ward from fifteen to twenty years of age, such leagues to be intrusted by the local authorities with a variety of tasks such as the supervision of roads and paths, streams and water courses, care of trees, protection of animals, control of the sanitary condition of members, promotion of gymnastics and hand work, rifle practice, and the like.

customed to say is that the children of all the people, without distinction of class, occupation, or wealth, go through the public schools just as certainly as the entire young manhood of the country later goes through the period of military training. Undoubtedly, the common experience of public school and military service contributes mightily to the feeling of solidarity, of comradeship even, with the whole people, which a Swiss man carries through life.

Exclusive private schools patronized by children of the wealthier classes are almost unknown in Switzerland. There are a few excellent boarding-schools in certain sections of the country, but the pupils who attend them are, with very few exceptions, boys and girls of foreign parentage, many of them English and American.[28]

Although the primary schools were considered to a slight degree only by advocates of formal instruction in civics,[29] they do lay the foundation of interest in and love of country in many ways. Even in the kindergarten the child of from four to six years of age listens to fairy stories some of which are drawn from local legend, and makes observations of familiar plants, animals, and insects, and of neighborhood activities which he seeks to reproduce in drawing, modeling, or

[28] As an exception, which, however, only proves the rule, the very interesting École Privat in Geneva may be mentioned, which celebrated its centenary in 1914 and is now under the management of the fourth generation of the Privat family which founded it and from which it takes its name. Many of the former pupils of the school have risen to prominence in the professional and political life of the canton, in the latter for the most part as members of the Conservative party, so that it deserves the appellation given it by one of its admirers of "a little Swiss Eton or Harrow." In 1927, there were 88 boys, mostly from seven to eleven years of age, in the École Privat, only one of whom was a foreigner. The most outstanding feature of the school is that it has long made a practice of self-government and training for citizenship, the boys choosing their own officers, civil and military, according to the forms of election practiced in Geneva, and engaging in a very interesting *Jeu de la République* which mimics the industrial and commercial as well as the political life, surrounding them. This game is described briefly by Ph. Privat, the present headmaster, in *L'éducateur,* 61st Year, No. 18 (October 3, 1925), p. 276. See, also, the *Centenaire de l'École Privat* (Geneva: Imp. Atar, 1914). A private school conducted by Dr. Zuberbühler at Glarisegg bei Steckborn uses Landsgemeinde methods as part of its plan. To make the record complete, it may be added that there are some private schools competing in a small way with the public schools in Vaud and also a few in the Catholic cantons.

[29] Not all Swiss authorities on pedagogy by any means admit the impossibility of teaching civics to young pupils. In a study, *Das A B C Staatsbürgerlichen Erziehung* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1916), based upon a wealth of experiment in this field, T. Wiget shows by a series of striking illustrations how the subject may be presented to them most effectively. The utilization of political events observed by children or described by newspapers is recommended among other devices. H. Lumpert, in *Der Antheil unserer Volksschule an der staatsbürgerlichen Erziehung* (St. Gallen: Fehr, 1917), also makes a strong plea for the presentation of civics in the public school, but not, however, as a special course.

building. For example, a favorite occupation of quite young children in Zürich is to make clay models of the houses of the prehistoric lake-dwellers, reproductions of which they have seen in the museum. During the first three years of primary school these activities are continued and extended; reading opens up to the child excellent textbooks, a large part of the contents of which are carefully selected from the best Swiss authors; and the practice of school walks and excursions makes him familiar with the surrounding country and sharpens his power of observation. Even in subjects seemingly having little connection with the political sphere, instruction of civic value may be introduced adroitly. Thus, in singing lessons, folk-songs may be used extensively; in hygiene, the harmful effects of tobacco and alcohol upon public health may be emphasized; and in arithmetic, important figures drawn from federal, cantonal, or communal administration may be utilized in problems.[30] Of recent years the more progressive public schools have greatly extended the time spent by children in school gardens and school workshops, partly because it sets them free from the tyranny of books and classrooms, partly because of the conviction that training of the hand is training of the brain as well, and finally because it lays the foundation for self-support by producing the "quality workmen" so essential to the industrial life of the country.[31]

During the intermediate stage *(Realstufe)* of the common school, including in the better city systems children of from nine to twelve years of age, local geography, history, and natural history are taken up systematically. In the lower grades these three subjects are fused together into one known as *Heimatkunde*, for which perhaps the best translation is "homeland lore." It is taught not only from books, of which there are large numbers of the greatest excellence, but also from observation on school walks and excursions. Homeland lore uses, as far as possible, the observation method *(Anschauungsmethode)*, and proceeds upon the principle: "From the near to the far" *(Vom Nahen zum Fernen)*; indeed, one may say that it begins with the elementary lore of the home village or town, expanding to the lore of the county *(Bezirk)* and canton, becoming in the end *Vaterlandskunde*, or lore of the fatherland. Unquestionably, one result of the application of this principle—a result which curiously enough is seldom, if ever, mentioned in pedagogical literature—is the very considerable strengthening of the love of locality, of devotion to the narrow as contrasted with the broader homeland, that is so characteristic of the Swiss and so potent in their politics.

---

[30] H. Lumpert, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[31] Robert Seidel, an original promoter of this idea, makes an enthusiastic argument for it in his pamphlet, *Die Schule der Zukunft eine Arbeitschule* (3d ed.; Zürich: Füssli, 1919).

Reference has been made above to the school walks and excursions *(Schulausflüge, Naturwanderungen, Excursionen)*, which are so common and delightful a feature of school life in Switzerland that they merit particular description. They begin with the youngest grade of primary children, whose trips are limited to a day and who are accompanied not infrequently by their mothers—to the mingled relief and annoyance, it must be said, of the teacher in charge. With older children the trips are extended to two, three, or more days. Visits are made to factories, museums, and historical sites as well as to the mountains, although, of course, it is the longer trips to the latter, equipped for cooking and camping-out or for sojourn in rest huts, that make the strongest appeal to boyish hearts. Recreation and exercise are aimed at as well as instruction on school excursions, but care is taken that the former are not overdone. Pupils who, on account of physical weakness, have been exempted from instruction in gymnastics are not permitted to accompany the party unless they present a physician's certificate, in addition to the written and signed approval of parents which, in fact, each child must bring. Each school has a committee on excursions, composed of teachers and board members who plan the trips to the minutest detail—even to the point, it is said, of taking into account the amount of climbing and descending involved in each day's stint of walking—the purpose being to make the trips enough of a strain for good sound exercise but not so much as to cause exhaustion. The committee also sees to it that the cost of longer trips is kept within a low limit, half-fare tickets being secured for railway journeys. If parents are too poor to afford the modest outlay involved, the school pays it in whole or in part.

While thoroughly delightful, it must not be inferred that Swiss school excursions are *Bummeleien*, that is, mere bumming expeditions. On the contrary, both teachers and pupils prepare themselves thoroughly for what is to be seen in the course of the trip. Teachers deliver informal talks en route dealing with the geography, geology, botany, and history of the region visited. Children are taught to read maps, and later to take measurements and make maps for their own use. In addition to the health and knowledge gained on excursions, teachers and pupils are drawn together in closer bonds of affection than would be possible were the contacts between them confined to the schoolroom.

The habit of wandering thus formed in childhood persists in later life. It is continued by the Boy Scouts, the League for Youth Shelters, and young men's organizations of every sort—bicycles, motorcycles, and occasionally an automobile, as well as the railroad being used to reach the starting-point for extended hikes in some distant region of the country. From such beginnings large numbers of men of mature years develop skill as mountain-climbers, devoting their all-too-brief summer vacations to this strenuous sport. As a result, a greater proportion of the Swiss than of any other people know their country in detail from end to end, and, knowing it so well, with all its incomparable natural beauties, develop for it that deep affection which is so marked a trait in their character. Professor Carleton Hayes, in his *Essays on Nationalism*, refers to the literal meaning of patriotism as "the love of one's *terra patria* or natal land," remarking that in all larger national or imperial states the great majority of the people know very little of their country, which, being patriotic in the broadest sense of the term, they are presumed to love as a whole.[32] Without stopping to inquire whether in the last analysis knowledge or ignorance is the better basis for love, certain it is that, thanks to school excursions and the habits they foster, a very considerable proportion of the Swiss know all the major mountain masses and valleys of the little country they hold dear as familiarly as a man knows the fingers of his glove.[33]

---

[32] Of "patriotism" in the literal sense of the word, Professor Hayes remarks (p. 23) that it "is natural enough,"—a statement, which, however, is open to question considering the drabness of many a "natal land." "Imperial patriotism," he continues, "is necessarily much more artificial, more dependent on socially inherited knowledge and conscious effort." Of course the Swiss enjoy every advantage which a superb natural environment can give in cultivating the narrower patriotism, but they do cultivate it most assiduously just the same. Also, they employ much "conscious effort" and "socially inherited knowledge" in cultivating a patriotism as extended as their national territory. Their task is rendered easier by the fact that the country is a small one, but the high degree of success attained is due largely to the intelligence and energy with which they perform it.

[33] Force and direction have been given to Swiss lore of nature by the organization in 1906 of the Naturschutzkommission of the Naturforschenden Gesellschaft der Schweiz, and in 1909 of a more popular association known as the Schweizerischer Bund für Naturschutz. To the efforts of these two organizations is due the creation of a national park, somewhat on the plan of our own great western reservations, covering some 20 square kilometers of the Val Cluoza in the Engadine, Canton Graubünden. They have co-operated, also, in procuring some much-needed legislation for the protection of wild life. While not directly connected with the public schools, the League for the Protection of Nature, under the leadership of General Secretary Dr. S. Brunies of Basel, has prepared and distributed among the school children of the country a large number of excellent illustrated pamphlets and leaflets, some of the latter in dialect, designed to arouse their interest in the protection of the plant and animal life of the country. So far as possible, these printed materials are used by

Reference was made above to the school texts used in the study of homeland lore. Their number is legion, for, owing to the principle "From the near to the far," which is rigorously applied, they are written not only with large cities but often with quite small towns as centers and starting-points. Robert Strickler, the author of a prize treatise on instruction in homeland lore,[34] remarks in his Preface that his attention had been drawn first to the general field some years before when he had undertaken to prepare a text on the subject based on the countryside of Hombrechtikon. Hombrechtikon, it appears upon looking up the matter in reference books, is a village almost wholly unknown to fame, of some 2,400 inhabitants located near the upper reaches of Lake Zürich in the canton of the same name. Similarly, many another country schoolmaster in Switzerland has been impelled to contribute to the large literature of the subject, leaving upon it the stamp of his own personal and pedagogical crotchets, perhaps, but also giving currency and significance to the life and customs of the locality. From brief and modest but effective treatises of this sort (the best the treasury of the village school board could afford to have printed) textbooks on homeland lore ascend to quite sizeable volumes suitable for the higher grades of city schools, well illustrated and supplied with numerous maps.[35] Royalties to authors cannot be large;

---

teachers in connection with nature-study courses given in the schools. Dr. Brunies is also author of a guide to the national park (Graubünden: Verkehrs-Verein), and editor of the organ of the League, the *Schweizerische Blätter für Naturschutz,* published bi-monthly (Basel: Verlag Benno Schwabe).

[34] *Der Unterricht in der Heimatkunde in seiner Stellung, Aufgabe und methodischen Gestaltung* (Zürich: Verlag d. Erziehungsdirektion, 1896).

[35] As illustrations may be mentioned G. Gattiker, *Heimatkunde der Stadt Zürich* (2d ed.; Zürich: Zürcher u. Furrer, 1912); O. Herold, *Bilder aus der Geographie und Geschichte des Kantons Glarus* (6th ed.; Glarus: Verlag d. Erziehungsdirektion, 1926); and F. Nussbaum, *Kleine Heimatkunde des Kantons Bern* (2d ed.; Bern: Kantonaler Lehrmittelverlag, 1925)—all three for primary-school use. For continuation and middle-school use, typical texts are E. Lerch, *Vaterlandskunde der Schweiz* (2d ed.; Zürich: Schulthess, 1919); H. Huber, *Der Schweizerbürger* (11th ed.; Zürich: Verlag Hüber, 1912); a collective volume *(Sammelband)* of the same title by E. Künzli, F. von Arx, and A. Affolter (Solothurn: Gassmann); *Le jeune citoyen,* a sort of illustrated scrapbook containing political materials of every sort (published annually, Administration der "Jeune Citoyen," Lausanne); and O. Wettstein, *Heimatkunde des Kantons Zürich* (Zürich: Schulthess, 1913). The latter is author also of an admirably compact and well-written book entitled *Die Schweiz, Land, Volk, Staat und Wirtschaft* (2d ed.; Aarau: Sauerländer, 1925), which, in addition to the topics mentioned in the title, deals also with the history and intellectual culture of the country. One of the most remarkable productions in this field is S. Walt, *Heimatkunde von Thal* (2d ed.; Frauenfeld: Huber, 1915), Thal being an unpretentious village not far from Bregenz. After presenting the subject in its ordinary form in a first volume, Walt devotes a second to *Jugend und Heimat,* the purpose of which is

but there is a freshness, individuality, and strong local color in the output which reflects admirably the variegated life of the country and is utterly unlike much of the dull uniform product of great publishing corporations in the United States, adapted for use simultaneously in the schools of perhaps twenty great commonwealths.

Fatherland lore *(Vaterlandskunde)*, which is presented in the upper grades of public schools, in continuation courses, and middle schools, is sometimes referred to as an enlargement of homeland lore.[36] As a rule, however, it gives less attention to geography or history and considerably more to civics. Recently, economic conditions have come in for greater emphasis under this heading.[37] Textbooks on fatherland lore first made their appearance in Switzerland toward the end of the eighteenth century, the earliest, a *Politisches Handbuch für die erwachsene Jugend*, by David Wyss of Zürich, having been published in 1790. Cantonal governments and educational boards of cities have often encouraged literary production in this field; for example, in 1826 the Council of State in Canton Vaud offered three prizes of 800, 400, and 200 francs, respectively—considerable sums in view of the time and the smallness of the territory represented—for the best compilations on civics suited to primary-school use. Since that date literally scores of texts in this field have been published, the number increasing with each decade.[38]

As a rule, Swiss schoolbooks on civics, while covering a wide range of materials, are narrowly specialized in aim, being designed for pupils of a definite grade and based largely on conditions prevailing in one or a few cantons. While perhaps well adapted for the limited purposes the authors had in mind, it must be confessed that most of them

---

to show how deep-rooted in the soil the life of the child is, and to develop this theme for literary and ethical as well as for civic results. In addition to the more commonplace themes of homeland lore he presents lengthy sections devoted to actual child experiences in the family circle, in house and yard, in group life, and even one devoted to individual life and experiences entitled *"Blicke ins eigene 'Ich.'"*

[36] The terms *"Staatskunde," "Verfassungskunde,"* and *"Bürgerkunde"* are also used in German Switzerland. In the French sections of the country the subject is referred to as *"Instruction civique,"* and in the Italian as *"Civica."*

[37] As, for example, in Robert Just, *Wirtschaftliche Vaterlandskunde* (Zürich: Schulthess, 1922), an excellent text devoted largely to elementary economics, abundantly illustrated by references to Swiss business and political life.

[38] A list published in the *Bibliographie der schweizerischen Landeskunde, Erziehungs- und Unterrichtswesen* (Bern: Wyss, 1908), III, 73, including under *"Heimatkunde"* the three subtitles *"Vaterlandskunde," "Verfassungskunde,"* and *"Staatskunde,"* names 76 textbooks, of which 26 made their appearance between 1891 and 1906.

give the impression of being too closely packed with facts, too dry and condensed, to be easily digestible by school children. Outline statements and statistical tables abound, and there are even manuals drawn up in the form of question-and-answer which remind one irresistibly and painfully of the catechism.[39] A few texts add extended sections dealing with ordinary civil law, thereby presenting matters of considerable practical importance perhaps but further overloading an already overloaded subject.[40] Under the circumstances it is not strange that pupils sometimes criticize their civics lessons as "the most difficult and least attractive of the whole school course, the ones which they like the least."[41] In defense of textbooks of the dry-as-dust variety it is said that the teacher should be able to add sufficient illustration and comment to make the subject interesting. Considering, however, the marked excellence of the textbooks offered in fatherland lore and also in history and reading, it seems unwise to place such great dependence upon the quality of instructors—always an uncertain factor—in a study so vital as civics.

Noting the unsatisfactory character of the literature in this field, Numa Droz, one of the most prominent Swiss statesmen of the eighties and nineties, determined to put some flesh on the bare bones, the result being his famous *Cours d'instruction civique,* a manual written with true charm and spirit, which has long been in use both in French and German Switzerland.[42] Since the appearance of this epoch-making book a considerable number of others, perhaps not possessing its fine literary style, but readable and competent, have made their appearance.[43]

---

[39] P. Augustin Benziger, *Bürgerkunde* (Ingenbohl: Päpstl. Theodosius Buchdruckerei), which, however, is designed primarily for normal schools, is a case in point. It includes a curious passage, p. 10, on the "key-power" *(Schlüsselgewalt)* of the married woman.

[40] For example, P. Augustin Benziger, *op. cit.*; Burkhardt Stöcklin, *Studie über Staats- und Bürgerkunde;* and Joseph Piller, *Leitfaden des Rechts- und Staatsbürgerlichen Unterrichtes* (Freiburg: Zentralstelle für Lehrmittel), the last named being designed especially for schools of Canton Freiburg. In texts of this character little or nothing is presented in the field of geography and history.

[41] Henri Elzingre, *Cours d'instruction civique* (Geneva: Atar), Part II, Introduction.

[42] Published, as was also the German translation by J. Näf and B. Niggli, under the title *Der Bürgerliche Unterricht,* by Lebet, Lausanne, 1885.

[43] Among texts in current use may be mentioned the following brief manuals: J. A. Herzog and J. Fischer, *Staatskunde für Schulen* (4th ed.; Aarau: Sauerländer, 1920); P. Etter, *Staats- und Verfassungskunde* (Zug: Kantonales Lehrmitteldepot); U. Tobler, *Verfassungskunde für die Fortbildungsschule* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1926); G. Wiget, *Vaterlandskunde* (4th ed.; St. Gallen: Fehr, 1920), an outline for

For all their skill in pedagogy, authors of Swiss textbooks succeed less well in the preparation of manuals for upper grades of students. As civics is an advanced subject in the public schools, we have here a partial explanation for the unsatisfactory conditions noted above. On the other hand, one must admit the rare ability with which they meet the needs of beginning students. As one example, an unpretentious treatise of some one hundred and fifty pages, well printed but wholly without illustrations, the *Little Lessons in Civics* by Brenno Bertoni, may be mentioned.[44] Taking as his hero a Ticinese village lad, born to hardship, Bertoni tells the story of his life in the family, in the school, at work in the neighborhood, and as an emigrant laborer in Italy, and his later career as a public-spirited citizen of the commune, its *sindaco*, and finally its representative in the Grand Council of the canton. With deft touch, bits of local history, of geography, of the daily life of the people, of their contacts with public authorities, of citizen conduct good and bad, of high moral ideals and their reward, are all woven into the fabric of the tale, which ends with a visit to Bern, giving the author a chance to describe the federal government as one sees it in action. It is fiction, of course, fascinating fiction at that, simple and artless and so close to the life of the children who read it that they might well forget it was a hateful schoolbook were there not at the end of each chapter half-page explanations of political details referred to in the text. But the little volume is more than fiction: thoroughly patriotically Ticinese in every line, it is nevertheless as Swiss as William Tell, and hence a document not to be neglected by those who suspect the southernmost canton of Italian leanings; to lovers of literature it may serve as a companion piece of *Alps and Sanctuaries*, revealing to the reader, seen with Bertoni's eyes from

---

students; E. Kupfer, *Abrégé d'instruction civique* (3d ed.; Lausanne: Payot, 1926); and L. Regolatti, *Elementi di civica* (2d ed.; Lugano: Deposito Scolastico, 1924). The following are more extended works: F. Frauchiger, *Der schweizerische Bundesstaat* (Zürich: Schulthess, 1922); R. Hotz, *Schweizer Bürgerkunde* (2d ed.; Zürich: Schulthess, 1911); O. Bindschedler, same title (Zürich: Füssli); G. Wiget, *Vaterlandskunde* (St. Gallen: Fehr, 1916), a handbook for teachers in continuation schools which gives special attention to St. Gall; G. Sauser-Hall, *Manuel d'instruction civique* (3d ed.; Lausanne: Payot 1921); and B. Perrelet, *Instruction civique* (same publisher, 1923).

[44] *Lezioncine di civica* (4th ed.; Bellinzona: Salvioni, 1916). Designed for use in primary schools of Ticino, the book is the only civics text approved by the department of public education of that canton. Bertoni is known also as the author of a volume of verses and as the editor of a large-scale cantonal anthology. Combining politics with poetry, he was a member of the *Gran Consiglio* of his canton during three legislative periods, of the Swiss National Council from 1914 to 1920, and is now one of the two councilors of state for Ticino at Bern.

within, what Samuel Butler, most sympathetic observer as he was, could see from the outside only; finally, it is a pedagogic gem of purest ray serene, too limited in scope perhaps to be counted a work of genius; but of all the hundreds of textbooks the present writer has read, with much weariness to the flesh, the only one he has followed throughout with delight and laid down at the end with regret.

As a type of the best Swiss work in textbook writing along more conventional lines may be mentioned Henri Elzingre, *Cours d'instruction civique, deuxième partie.*[45] It is a beautiful product of the publisher's art, finely printed, its eighty-two large pages presenting more than eighty plans and illustrations, the latter of a sort appealing particularly to young persons. The text is clear and simple, well divided into headings and subheadings, with résumés following each chapter. Elzingre's book is devoted to the federal government, but an earlier treatise deals in the same way with the institutions of the canton of Geneva, and similar treatises are designed for each of the other Romance cantons. It may be worth noting here that, whether cantonal government is treated first or last in civics texts, it always receives a large amount of attention, sometimes in the more elementary books being given more space than the federal government. One is struck also with the fact that the concept of patriotism is never presented in bellicose fashion; while the necessity of defending the country and details regarding its military system are presented, the peaceful mission of Switzerland and the citizen's duty of serving in peace as well as in war are always strongly emphasized. Relations with foreign nations are dealt with, as a rule, much attention being given the Red Cross and other international unions and bureaus of which Switzerland is a member and which it has done so much to promote. In one, at least, of the more recent manuals a statement regarding the organization and work of the League of Nations is added to the customary discussions of cantonal and federal government in a way which might suggest to the student that he is a citizen of the world as well as a citizen of Switzerland.[46]

In addition to the multitude of textbooks dealing with such composite and peculiarly Swiss subjects as homeland lore and fatherland lore there are also numerous school geographies and histories, nearly all of which are of high merit. Apparently without exception the latter are based on the principle "From the near to the far," and designed for use in certain sections or cantons of the country. Of the two subjects, history is decidedly the more difficult to handle because of past controversies, political and religious. As a consequence, the criticism is heard at times that textbooks in that field, while well written and illustrated, nevertheless stick too close to the bare facts and avoid interpretation. Here again, obviously, much is left to the instructor, who, however, must exercise discretion in his turn. On the other hand, the fact that the author usually has the history of a single canton primarily in view enables him to express himself with more freedom than if he were writing for the whole of Switzerland.[47]

---

[45] Genève, Édition Atar.

[46] H. Duchosal and M. Haissly, *Notions élémentaires d'instruction civique,* adopted by the department of public instruction of the canton of Geneva (8th ed.; Geneva: Édition Atar, 1922). See also discussion of the League of Nations in G. Sauser-Hall, *op. cit.,* p. 232.

At the risk of repetition, a word should be said about the readers used in Swiss schools. In them one finds reflected all the variety of language and custom characteristic of Swiss life. Devised as a rule for a given grade and for some particular canton, they have the strongest possible local flavor. The contents are well selected from the best authors, Swiss preferred, of course, and local lights of literature by no means underrated. Always well printed and well illustrated, school readers usually devote from a half to three-fourths of their space to legends and historical narrations, nature study and geography, the flora and fauna of the neighborhood, the care of domestic animals, the trades, industries, architecture, and customs of the canton. Because of the excellence and catholicity of their contents, they not only serve as an introduction to the language and literature of the mother-tongue but are also of considerable civic value, supplementing admirably what is taught under the heading of homeland lore.

---

[47] As types of schoolbooks on history the following may be mentioned: Marthe Reymond, *Histoire Suisse contée par Grand' Mère* (Neuenburg: Delachaux et Niestle), a gem of narration designed for children in the earliest grades, the popularity of which is attested by its translation into German under the title *Schweizer-Geschichte für das kleine Volk;* the admirable *Histoire illustrée de la Suisse* by W. Rosier, new edition by E. Savary (Geneva: Payot, 1926), which was adopted for primary-school use by the cantons of Vaud, Neuchâtel, Geneva, and Bern; F. Pieth, *Schweizergeschichte für Bündnerschulen* (2d ed.; Chur: Schuler, 1919), an excellent type of book written with a single canton (Graubünden) in mind; R. Luginbuhl, *Geschichte der Schweiz* (2d ed.; Basel: Helbing u. Lichtenhahn, 1926), written for the middle-school student which enjoyed the—for Switzerland—enormous sale of 49,000 copies; R. Wirz and H. Gubler, *Geschichtslehrmittel für Sekundarschulen* (6th ed.; Zürich: Verlag d. Erziehungsdirektion, 1926), an extended collection of source materials required in the canton of Zürich; D. Fuchs, *Schweizergeschichte für die Fortbildungschule* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1924), a marvel of condensation covering the period from the lake-dwellers to the present in 43 small pages; and *Lehrbuch der Welt- und Schweizergeschichte* (Bern: Francke, 1907), by J. Grunder and H. Brugger, an even greater marvel of condensation, designed for use in the secondary and continuation schools of Canton Bern.

Interminable as the foregoing lists may have seemed, Swiss schooling is not confined to books; rather, the intent seems to be to seek emancipation from them so far as possible. Besides the workshops, gardens, and kitchens of the more progressive public schools, the universal practice of hiking, the general emphasis laid on the observation method, and the severely practical training given in continuation and special occupational schools, one is impressed also by the large share of attention devoted to physical culture. The latter, indeed, is conceived as an essential part of civic education, both as preparation for army service and as laying the foundation for future economic independence and healthy parenthood. In addition to required work in gymnastics many of the better schools offer courses in swimming and organized play. For orphans, for the blind, deaf, and dumb, and for all classes of physically and mentally weak children a great variety of well-managed special institutions are provided.

Coeducation is the general practice in Switzerland except that, as a rule, the sexes are separated in the middle school.[48] Although women are not admitted to the suffrage, girls as well as boys pursue the courses offered in civics. Reference has been made already to the fact that, while the sexes are represented equally in the enrolment of the public schools, male students predominate overwhelmingly in all institutions of higher grade, a condition in sharp contrast to that prevailing in the United States and to be explained only by the inferior economic resources of the Swiss people. In the public schools not only is tuition free but books and other school materials are also furnished without charge, mostly at the expense of the communal government. Many of the more progressive cantons provide school lunches without cost to needy children, and even suitable clothing. On the other hand, not all the middle schools are tuition-free, and in any event books and school materials must be paid for by the student.[49] Scholarships and stipends are available to some extent, but it is at this point that many parents have to forego the further education of their children. Among the Swiss, as among the Scotch, economy frequently takes the form of selecting that one among the boys who shows the greatest intellectual

[48] In various places the sexes are separated in the minor secondary schools. Coeducation is permitted, as a rule, in continuation schools; but, owing to the occupational character of most of the work they offer, classes are usually composed wholly either of boys or girls.

[49] As cantonal institutions, middle-school tuition fees are made exceptionally low for resident citizens, the scale of the *Kantonsschule* of St. Gallen, for example, being as follows: citizens of the canton or of other cantons resident in St. Gallen, 60 francs; citizens of other cantons residing outside St. Gallen, 140 francs; foreigners resident in the canton, 170 francs; foreigners resident outside the canton, 350 francs per year.

promise and giving him the best education that the resources of the family permit. As Gottfried Keller puts it näively in the mouth of Frau Hediger,

> This or that parent will have a gifted son who wishes to rise in the world, if there is enough property in the family to permit him to study. One wishes, perhaps, to become a popular doctor, another a respected lawyer or even a judge, still another an engineer or an artist; and each of them, once he has brought it that far, will find it easy to make a good marriage, and so in the end to establish a respected, numerous and happy family.

Nor did the good but somewhat talkative wife overlook the fact that in such cases the fortunate one might help his aged parents and give his brothers a lift from time to time so that they also "might come to sit upon a green bough."[50]

With this background in mind, one is better prepared to understand the intense seriousness with which the Swiss student, scarcely emancipated from childhood, goes about getting an education. It is reinforced by that frugality and tenacity of character inherited from ancestors who, generation after generation, had to struggle with a mountain environment for a bare living, and further by the knowledge of the high requirements and economic difficulties to be surmounted by anyone seeking to establish himself in a learned profession. Although the curriculum of the middle school is made up largely of cultural subjects, it is pursued, nevertheless, with professional eagerness because a professional aim is held in view. Preparatory and academic youth in Switzerland accomplishes marvels, as we have seen, in languages and literatures; and its achievements in other fields are almost equally remarkable. There is a conspicuous absence for the most part of those countless "activities" of American students of the same age among which, as President Aydelotte has remarked, study is never by any chance included.[51] One wonders, indeed, whether each has not gone to an extreme, whether the Swiss student with all his thoroughness and solidity, but overburdened, nevertheless, with too many subjects, does not lose something of the optimism and resourcefulness of the more easy-going and flimsily prepared American.

In support of this view one often hears the remark—chiefly from reformers and agitators, it is true, but also at times from professors—that university students are too deeply immersed in their work to take an interest in questions of the day.[52] At times they are even accused of intellectual snobbery, of looking down with disdain upon the vulgar struggles of contemporary politics from the heights of their own scientific or professional preoccupations. Contrasts are drawn between the active and even belligerent part played by student organizations during the Regeneration period (1830–48) and the flaccid attitude of their successors at the present time. Socialists explain the situation, of course, as the natural turning-aside of youth from a money-grubbing and decadent society; pacifists, as a consequence of the World War; and Fascists, as due to the lack of a Mussolini.

---

[50] *Fähnlein der Sieben Aufrechten,* G. W., VI, 267.

[51] "Honors Courses in American Colleges and Universities," *Bulletin of the National Research Council,* VII, Part IV, No. 40, 6.

On the other hand, it is asserted that the students of Western Switzerland, where the ideas of the French Revolution still live, are interested and active politically to an extent unknown among their brothers in the German section of the country. Moreover, certain undergraduate fraternities and associations which have had a distinguished history seek to keep the older traditions alive. Chief among these is the Zofingia, which, according to its constitution, has for its prime end the development of love of country among its members.[53] While it abstains from partisan politics, nevertheless it may, by a three-fourths vote of its membership, take a position upon a national question. At annual meetings of the society held each July in the quaint little town of Zofingen, addresses of importance are made occasionally by Swiss statesmen and intellectuals, which in pamphlet form secure wide distribution. Recently also, the principal political parties have begun to enrol and organize students. Socialists had long prided themselves that they alone knew how to reach and enthuse youth, but the Catholic Conservative and Independent Democratic (Freisinnige-demokratische) parties are now at work, each in its own way, to the same end. Under the auspices of the latter an Academic Day was held on June 30, 1928, meeting in the hall of the National Council at Bern and attended by two hundred delegates representing students in all the universities of the country, and resulting in the formation of a permanent organization.[54]

---

[52] Thus Professor A. Egger, of the University of Zürich, vigorously assails the political quiescence of contemporary academic youth in Switzerland in a pamphlet entitled *Student und Politik* (Zürich: Rascher, 1918). Journals devoted to civic training are full of poignant complaints on the same subject.

[53] *Centralstatuten des Zofingervereins* (Geneva: Kundig, 1926), p. 2. An admirable history of the society, presenting particularly its political activities, has been written by Professor Charles Gilliard, *La Société de Zofingue, 1819–1919* (Lausanne: Bridel, 1919).

[54] A detailed account of this meeting, together with abstracts of the speeches delivered, most of them by university professors, is presented in *Der Staatsbürger*, 12. Jhrg., Nr. 14 (July 16, 1928).

TEACHERS

Rich as are the Swiss schools in traditional background, excellent as they are in scope and method, nevertheless their chief claim to distinction lies in the personnel of the teaching profession. The fact that the latter is criticized so often because it does not achieve the impossible task of training a perfect citizenship is, after all, the strongest kind of proof, albeit of a negative sort, that the people place a heavy responsibility upon the men and women who instruct their children. Positively the responsibility resting upon teachers is affirmed by the universal respect and deference in which they are held. If not *the* first, they are certainly among the first citizens of the land.

In Switzerland one never hears teachers referred to as "quite excellent persons, no doubt, but somewhat visionary because of their higher 'theoretical' education or because they are engaged not in 'practical' business but in educational work." Nor are they currently commiserated as genteel paupers. For one reason, the incomes of other classes of workers are not so inflated that either the rising retail dealer or the prosperous plumber, for example, is in a position to look down with contempt upon the salaries paid in the public schools. In general, teachers are well rewarded materially, as Swiss standards go, although it is now desirable that some increases be made either by doubling the federal subvention of 1903 or out of local funds.

Even the hard-headed peasant class, which in other European countries is not at all inclined to place a high rating on intellectual accomplishment, is perforce impressed in Switzerland by the fact, not at all uncommon, that the teacher is the only inhabitant of the village who can afford a car. Sometimes, indeed, the peasant grumbles because the schoolmaster is better rewarded in the goods of this world than the horny-handed tiller of the soil. He takes his revenge, however, by making the teacher do the work of communal clerk and election officer, of carrying on all correspondence with higher cantonal and federal authorities, and of such other local public jobs as require some degree of education and knowledge of forms.

In many cases the popular feeling toward schoolmen goes beyond respect and deference. The village pedagogue or the humble instructor in a poverty-stricken city ward who, as so many of them do, teaches with unusual skill and gives himself unreservedly to his pupils, becomes a local worthy, loved and venerated. A man of great gifts and wide vision who brings about some notable improvement in educational methods or who rises to the headmastership of a large school is regarded as a leading citizen of his canton and of the federation, and at his death is eulogized with as much fulness and considerably more affection than a statesman of national prominence.[55]

The teachers of Switzerland have earned the marked esteem of their fellow-citizens not only by services performed in the schools but also by their high professional qualifications and their thorough professional organization. They are rigorously trained in excellent normal and cantonal schools and in the universities of their own and of neighboring countries.[56] They are well organized in local and national associations with various sectional and *ad hoc* subdivisions, the proceedings of which receive a surprisingly large share of attention not only in pedagogical journals but in the public press as well. It is perhaps worth mentioning that, adopting political terminology, a meeting of delegates representing one of these organizations is called a diet *(Lehrertag)*, and mass meetings of teachers are often referred to as Landsgemeinden. At times of controversy in school affairs, as, for instance, after the Wettstein motion was adopted by the Council of States, the position taken by leading bodies of teachers becomes a matter of prime national importance. Thus, the theses adopted by the Swiss Society of Teachers on that famous proposal were discussed from one end of the country to the other.[57]

Besides speaking for the profession as a whole, the educational associations of Switzerland are active, at times to the point of employing trade-union tactics, in defending the individual rights of their members, particularly whenever any threat against the liberty of teaching is involved. There is a strong popular conviction favoring tolerance in such cases and, as in all public offices, of continuing the incumbent during good behavior; but these factors are materially reinforced by the knowledge that if a teacher is unjustly discharged by a local board or is refused re-election on frivolous grounds by his community,[58] the local or cantonal association will see to it that no properly certificated candidate will accept the vacant place.

---

[55] See, for example, the obituary article on Dr. Albert Barth, of Basel, which appeared in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of May 18, 1927, evening edition, No. 837.

[56] There are now 34 public and 10 private normal schools in Switzerland. In general a training of four or five years is required for the preparation of a primary-school teacher. In addition, a secondary-school teacher must have studied several semesters at a university.

[57] Quoted by J. Savary in an extended article on "L'éducation nationale en Suisse," which appeared in the *Annuaire de l'instruction publique en Suisse, 1919,* p. 79.

[58] Public-school teachers are elected by popular vote in Zürich and certain other cantons, a practice which works much better than one might expect. Of course, choice is restricted to properly certificated applicants, and this, taken in connection with the other cautionary factors noted above, prevents the playing of "practical" politics.

Teaching is still predominantly a man's profession in Switzerland. Even the lower grades have not been largely feminized in the interests of a dubious economy. Figures for the year 1928 show that 60 per cent of the 13,176 teachers in the thirty-three hundred primary schools of the country were men.[59] In the higher institutions the predominance of the latter is overwhelming. They made up more than 85 per cent of the instructing staff in the ordinary secondary schools *(écoles secondaires)* and in the superior secondary schools *(écoles secondaires supérieures)*. Moreover, a large proportion of the women teachers in Swiss schools are quite as permanently attached to the profession as are their male colleagues. There is a refreshing absence of the flapper type which occupies itself casually and decoratively in the schoolroom for two or three years prior to the march to the altar. The Swiss seem to be free also from prejudice against married women teachers. It is, indeed, quite common to find the public school of a village under the direction of a man and his wife, the latter teaching the lower and the former the higher grades, both occupying the upper floor of the school building as a residence. In the rural parts of Canton Bern, out of 2,800 teachers there are some 600 married couples. With characteristic economy the peasants are inclined to favor the arrangement, not only because it makes for permanency and effective teaching but also because the services of a man and wife may be secured at a slightly lower cost than the services of two unmarried teachers. Cases are not unusual of teaching-couples, married in early youth, who devote forty or fifty years jointly to their profession in one and the same village, becoming a sort of second mother and father to all its inhabitants.

Beyond doubt the remarkable influence enjoyed by Swiss teachers is due not only to their high professional training and organization but also to their manly independence and activity as citizens. They are proud of their profession, proud to belong to it, aware of the public esteem in which it is held, sometimes so much so as to adopt a rather pontifical manner; but, on the other hand, they are conscious of its obligations to the public and willing to be of service to the community, outside as well as inside the schoolroom. Employment of rural teachers in the clerical work of their villages, as we have already noted, is quite common; and it has the decided advantage of bringing them into almost as close contact with the adult population as their school duties associate them familiarly with the children. Moreover, through the performance of his communal duties the schoolmaster soon comes to know more about local custom and administration than the oldest inhabitant, and thus becomes an arbiter among his neighbors. There are many such "village Hampdens" in Switzerland, and it is largely because of them that the tendency to look upon teachers as impractical visionaries is conspicuously absent. In the celebration of August 1 and other anniversaries schoolmasters are much in demand to deliver patriotic addresses, a tribute both to their historical knowledge and to their popularity. Besides the manifold civil duties they perform, many teachers are reserve officers in the army, here again establishing contact with practical life and dealing with men well beyond school age. Finally, and most important of all, Swiss schoolmasters who are interested in political questions do not make it a practice to feign indifference or to curry favor with both sides: on the contrary, they are, outside the schools, likely to be quite as open in the avowal of their partisan preferences as any of their fellow-citizens. In short, the teachers of Switzerland belong to the active life about them, and are not counted as members of the third sex.

---

[59] Figures quoted from *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1928,* p. 271. There were, however, 3,368 auxiliary teachers in the primary schools of whom all but 126 were women.

A very considerable proportion of Swiss schoolmasters engage actively in party politics. The number who reach high federal office is not large, as is shown by the percentages of various professions represented in the National Council.[60] Teachers are more commonly to be found in cantonal or local legislatures, membership in which is less likely to interfere with their professional duties. On the other hand, the foreign observer is constantly impressed with the frequent employment by Swiss parties, both in organization work and in policy determination, of the academic expert. Perhaps the most striking illustration is supplied by Dr. Ernst Laur, leader of the Peasants' party and certainly one of the most influential men in the country, who brings to his political duties the prestige of a professorship in the Polytechnikum at Zürich and a profound knowledge of agriculture and forestry. At party diets, generally when important decisions with regard to policies are to be determined, it is a common practice to invite one or more university specialists of note to prepare and read detailed reports, following which there is discussion from the floor and the formulation of resolutions, the latter, by the way, closely resembling in form and purpose American platform planks.

Of course all these party services undertaken by members of the teaching profession do not pass without notice, nor, indeed, without a measure of criticism. There is some sentiment, particularly in the smaller villages against "pernicious political activity" on the part of teachers; and catch phrases are current among rural voters to the effect that "the school must remain free from politics"; "the teacher must not play politics" *(politisieren)*; or "the teacher belongs in the school, not in the council chamber." In cities, however, political activity on the part of teachers is so common that it passes almost unnoticed except by groups which feel themselves neglected or injured thereby. Even the latter, however, are disinclined to do more in the matter—indeed, it is virtually impossible to do more—than resort to the time-honored Swiss vent of scolding *(man kann immer schimpfen)* in private gatherings or at the *Stammtisch.*

---

[60] Cf. chap. ii.

Of course, the situation created by active participation in politics on the part of public-school teachers would be much less likely to arouse criticism in influential quarters if the latter were members only of conservative or local majority parties. As a matter of fact, this is not the case, a considerable number of them being Socialists. According to a well-informed authority, not a member of that party, some 8 per cent of the teaching force of the Bernese middle schools belonged to it. In the lower grades the percentage was stated as even higher, partly, perhaps, because of the lower salaries paid, but more largely because teachers of this group learn by contact with children from working families what hard living conditions many of the latter have to meet. A well-known instructor in the boys' secondary school of Bern is president of the Social Democratic party of Switzerland, as such having a considerable secretariat working under him; a member of the National Council; a prolific writer of pamphlets and newspaper articles on party issues; a frequent orator at party gatherings; and, at the same time, he manages—heaven only knows how—to carry on his class work in German and geography!

Clerical, nationalistic, and capitalist elements naturally view with alarm the presence of Socialists in the teaching force of public schools. One of the devices of the first-named group to combat this condition recently aroused considerable indignation among the teachers of Bern. Shortly after the appointment of a papal *nuntius* to the federal government it became known that children of the Catholic faith residing in the capital city were instructed by some of their spiritual advisers to note and report what was said by public-school teachers in the classroom. As for the nationalist and capitalist elements, there is, of course, much conversational and some little journalistic lamentation over Socialist teachers and their political activities. But the same elements are almost equally disgruntled over the employment of large numbers of brothers and sisters belonging to Catholic orders (Lehrbrüder and Lehrschwestern) as public-school teachers in the inner cantons. It is even maintained on high authority that the latter practice is contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the federal constitution,[61] but the strength of the Catholic Conservative party in the National Assembly is so great and the need of its support by the Independent Democrats to make up a working majority so constant that there is not the least likelihood of federal intervention in the matter. So far as Socialist teachers are concerned also, the popular support of their party is sufficiently strong and so many of its representatives already sit on school boards that interference is highly improbable. Indeed, as the situation in the Catholic cantons shows, the opposite danger may arise in time, namely, that in strongly Socialist cities applicants of that political faith may find preference in appointment to teaching positions. At present professional qualifications are so high and the number of applicants so sharply limited by them that few charges of party favoritism are made, and these are deprecated as a rule in well-informed quarters. Here, as in other branches of the public service, however, one does elicit the occasional admission that, as between two candidates of equal or nearly equal qualifications, a Socialist appointing authority will favor the Socialist and a middle-class *(bürgerlich)* authority, the middle-class candidate. Charges of personal, family, and clique wire-pulling to secure appointment to public office generally are rather more common than charges that party influence has been invoked.

In the final analysis, however, the broad tolerance accorded teachers who engage in political activities rests not so much upon the weight of partisan support as upon the conviction held by men of light and leading among the Swiss people that such activities are well within the rights of those concerned and desirable in themselves. For the most authentic and convincing expression of that conviction ever presented, one should consult an article by Dr. O. Wettstein, himself a member of the Democratic party, on *Der politisiernde Lehrer*, first published in 1911 and often reprinted since.[62] In the opinion of the distinguished member of the Council of States from Zürich, some of his fellow citizens are too narrowly inclined to think of themselves as taxpayers, and hence as employers of public officials, including teachers.

---

[61] Of course, the teaching brothers and sisters have passed the state examinations for licenses and are subject to state supervision. On this point, cf. Fritz Fleiner, *Schweizerisches Bundesstaatsrecht,* p. 521.

[62] As, for example, in *Der Staatsbürger,* 7. Jhrg., Nr. 19 (October 1, 1923), S. 146.

Like certain other employers in private life who attempt to control or suppress the political activities of their workmen, such taxpaying citizens show an imperfect grasp of modern constitutional principles guaranteeing liberty of action to the voter. They would do well also to remember that teachers and other civil servants are just as much taxpayers as themselves. Turning from rebuttal to affirmative argument, Dr. Wettstein holds that effective public-school instruction in civics, of which he is perhaps the most thoroughgoing and distinguished advocate in Switzerland, cannot be presented merely as dead knowledge gleaned from textbook outlines, mechanically repeated in the classroom. Only that teacher who knows politics through actual contact can handle it as a vital subject, illustrating its processes from his own experience. The prime purpose of instruction in civics is not merely to enable the pupil to pass an examination, but rather to train him to political thinking, political judgment, political action. And those who endeavor to impart such training with success must possess it themselves; nor can they attain it without personally participating in politics. Hence, asserts Dr. Wettstein,

> It is not only the teacher's right, it is his ethical duty, to co-operate actively in the political field. Public life cannot help profiting thereby. In these days when politics threatens to dissolve into a struggle of interests, when economic antagonisms menace the destruction of the ideal interests of the state as a whole and the moral idea of the state itself, it is bitterly necessary that men of more universal conceptions and of more ideal inclinations should play their part.

If the foregoing reasoning is sound, it applies quite as fully to teachers who by conviction work in the Socialist party as to teachers who affiliate with other parties. Excepting fanatics of any stripe, and assuming that partisanship is laid aside at the door of the schoolhouse, Dr. Wettstein reaches the conclusion that

> there can be among us no talk of excluding militant Social Democratic teachers from public-school instruction. Such action would be not only unnecessary but undesirable. Look at the facts in the case. In their own party Social Democratic teachers pass for anything but noisy agitators, and even of the most radical among them it cannot be maintained that their public-school work suffers because of the one-sidedness of their political views. . . . . And particularly for the Social Democratic teachers is it of advantage when they participate in the practical politics of the council chamber: by so doing, they learn to appreciate properly what is actually attainable, recognize the blessings of work toward definite ends, and so are set free from utopian imaginings.

It is not only in connection with parties, however, that Swiss teachers develop political activity. They take a prominent part in the work of the civics courses *(Staatsbürgerkurse)* and in such public-spirited organizations as the New Helvetic Society; their names are often signed to initiative and referendum proposals, particularly those aiming at moral improvement, e.g., for the abolition of gambling places. No class or profession in Switzerland has done so much to combat the evils of alcoholism, and certainly none has done more in support of the generally accepted opinion that these evils may be attacked effectively rather by educational means than by governmental compulsion.[63] In various pedagogical associations there are sections devoted to this question which, without any of the exaggeration characteristic of the old "physiology" taught in American schools prior to prohibition, have prepared literature, charts, and placards adapted to the child mind and calculated to encourage abstinence from liquors of high alcoholic content rather than teetotalism.

In all the foregoing efforts for political and social betterment teachers come into conflict with powerful property interests which do not hesitate to reply with argument to argument. It is not the custom in Switzerland, however, for aggrieved economic groups to denounce any teacher who antagonizes them as a dangerous radical, perhaps even a Bolshevik, or to endeavor to secure his removal. If action of the latter character were initiated, it would redound to the injury not of the teacher but of the interest making what would be regarded generally as a thoroughly unwarranted move. A rather striking illustration of the remarkable degree of independence and immunity enjoyed by members of the teaching profession in Switzerland occurred recently in Geneva. On December 8, 1927, a group of twenty-nine primary-school teachers of that city united in a statement favoring the suppression of the military budget and the disarmament of Switzerland. The incident kicked up an enormous amount of dust throughout every section of the country. It was, of course, thoroughly offensive to the nationalist and militarist elements, particularly since the Swiss term of army training is the shortest in the world and the cost of its maintenance extremely low. Newspapers reflecting the opinions of these elements belabored in all three national languages the erring primary teachers of Geneva with every form of editorial argument and sarcasm. On the other hand, Socialist sheets rushed to their defense, rather awkwardly perhaps, because the platforms of the party in certain other European countries demand just such a militia army as Switzerland already possesses.

---

[63] On this point cf. Friedrich Frauchiger, *Die pädagogische Reformbewegung* (Bern: Francke, 1911), p. 29.

Somewhat frightened perhaps by the journalistic and political reverberations of the incident, the Union of Genevan Primary Teachers (they do use the term "Union" although too much significance need not be attached to it) decided to conduct a postal card referendum of its membership on the question. The vote, announced January 7, 1928, showed that 60 of the primary teachers favored disarmament, 86 opposed it, 45 not voting. While the poll established the fact that a majority of those voting were opposed to extreme pacifism, still the militarists were greatly dissatisfied, for it also demonstrated that the original 29 were not without support among their professional brethren. And all parties, apparently, were disgusted with the 45 members of the Union who did not have enough courage to express an opinion.

In the end the incident led to an interpellation, followed by a full-dress debate participated in by the leading members of the cantonal Grand Council. It was a truly notable forensic display, which was concluded, somewhat tamely, by a declaration of the president of the Council of State to the effect that that body disapproved the gesture made without reflection by the teachers who had pronounced themselves in favor of the suppression of the military budget, but that it considered no other sanctions necessary nor was it willing to accept the proposal made by one of the members of the Grand Council that some form of punishment be prescribed for infliction in case of a relapse.[64] So ended the incident; but from a trans-Atlantic point of view one still may gaze, and still the wonder grows that no super-patriotic individual, nor any single 100 per cent organization of male or female membership in the whole of Switzerland, demanded the instant dismissal and deportation of the original 29 or ultimate 60 pacifist primary teachers of Geneva.

To sum up, the most effective item in the contribution of the Swiss school system toward civic training is the high character of the teachers themselves. Except in minor particulars, few faults can be found with the profession, and, upon examination, these may be shown to be the defects of its qualities. For one thing, the teachers of Switzerland have perhaps too much sense of corporate unity and of the satisfactory nature of the educational *status quo*, as shown in the resistance of middle-school faculties to reform. Dignity with them is sometimes carried to a point which precludes a saving sense of humor; nevertheless, in this they reflect the seriousness of their own people. In another respect also, they exemplify a trait of national character, namely, the excessive democratic antipathy to open and avowed personal leadership. Everywhere in Swiss education, as in Swiss politics and life generally, one-man power is avoided. Thus it is the custom for faculties to decide important questions of educational policy, electing nominal rectors for short periods from their own midst to symbolize regency and to act on ceremonial occasions. The American practice of centralizing formal power and responsibility in a city school superintendent or in a university president is contrary to their instinctive feeling; and, although cases do occur where men of rare ability infuse a whole institution with their own spirit, they do so by virtue of influence rather than by command. In minor matters the same principle holds. It is not quite the thing professionally, for example, for a teacher who is engaged upon some novel experiment in education to advertise his findings and make propaganda for his peculiar methods. "*Nur nicht springen*" is the proverbial rule of conduct, here as elsewhere in Swiss life. Nevertheless, a considerable number of teachers are continually engaged in interesting pedagogical experiments which in other countries would receive a large amount of publicity.

---

[64] The debate of the Grand Council was reported at length in the *Journal de Genève* of January 30, 1928, and was commented on copiously by the whole Swiss press. According to later newspaper reports, the resolution brought forward by the primary teachers of Geneva came up for consideration at the Twenty-second Congress of the Pedagogical Society of Romance Switzerland, which met at Porrentruy, June 29, 1928, where it was voted down by 404 out of 431 votes. Nevertheless, the Society accepted unanimously a motion favoring general and simultaneous disarmament under the auspices of the League of Nations.

Colleagues among themselves, Swiss teachers are masters in the schoolroom. It does not follow that they are harsh and tyrannical in the government of pupils; on the contrary, understanding and sympathy on their part, and respect, even affection, on the part of their charges, are common. Nevertheless, uneasy voices, especially from the camp of civics enthusiasts, raise the question occasionally whether more might not be done in the way of student self-government.[65] American experiments with school commonwealths are followed with interest in Switzerland, and attempts to reproduce them have been made in various places notably in Basel, Zürich, Peterzell, and Schwanden. Also, in one of the advanced schools of St. Gallen a Landsgemeinde of the students has been in existence since 1909.

Proponents of the self-government idea hold that the school took form when European states, including Switzerland, were autocratically governed, that the autocracy of the political ruler transferred itself quite naturally to the teacher and has survived, substantially unchanged, into our own times. Wherever autocracy has given way to popular rule, however, and especially in Switzerland which carries the latter to an extreme degree, the autocracy of teachers, no matter how benevolent, is an anachronism. Schools managed in this way can no more produce citizens capable of independent political action than schools confined wholly to dry land can produce swimmers. In reply to the foregoing argument, pedagogical standpatters point out that contemporary life requires a very large degree of subordination on the part of the individual—in the army, for example, and in industry; also that, judging by certain of the antics of the younger generation, this is decidedly not the time to intrust it with a larger measure of self-determination. The compromise view—a view much easier to formulate than to apply—is that the school must develop simultaneously a twofold ability in the future citizen. He must be able, first, to subordinate his egocentric desires cheerfully in mass action for a common end; and, second, he must develop sufficient individuality to reach his own decisions wherever this is necessary, especially as a sovereign voter in a highly democratic state.

---

[65] Cf. especially, H. Lumpert, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

In spite of the tendency, which seems greatly exaggerated in Switzerland, to hold the schools almost entirely responsible for civic training, it is often pointed out that other factors must be taken into account—the family, church, press, economic conditions, parties, and public life. All of these are discussed in some detail elsewhere. Suffice it to say here that the influence of the family is not so great as in earlier generations, disintegration under the influence of modern economic conditions having made considerable progress. Among Christian nations the divorce rate of Switzerland is second only to that of the United States; nevertheless, it is less than half as great as our own.[66] In Protestant Switzerland, at least, the influence of the church is no longer as powerful as it was. Parties tend to reflect more and more the trends of economic forces, and, as we shall see, are vigorously engaged upon a sort of civic education in their own interest. As to economic conditions themselves, there can be no doubt that their effect upon citizenship is even more direct and compelling. Swiss idealists are forever lamenting the inroads of modern materialism. It is fairly obvious that many of the defects in civic training charged against the school are in fact attributable to the last-mentioned factor. Against such powerful forces teachers and textbooks are of little avail: noth-

[66] F. W. Blackmar and J. L. Gillin, *Sociology*, p. 146.

ing short of reforms establishing a greater measure of social justice can meet the situation.

Advocates of a greater measure of civic training seem to attach too much importance to the mere acquisition of knowledge regarding political rights and duties. No doubt such knowledge is valuable, particularly in a democracy so advanced as Switzerland. One might suppose that teachers would concur most readily in this opinion; nevertheless, they have protested against it vigorously. Often, as they have pointed out, it is precisely those members of a community whose knowledge is most extensive who fail most completely in the performance of civic duty.

> Take, for example, the opposition between the German and Romance sections of the country after the outbreak of the war or the opposition between the confessions and it must be admitted that it is precisely the educated who fail to the greatest degree in civic spirit. Who are they that have been found wanting to the greatest degree and who are found wanting even today in these matters? The intellectuals, the educated, even—parliamentarians, who at patriotic festivals make lovely speeches and sing the high hymn of the fatherland. Through them came and still come these antagonisms into the masses of the people.[67]

Aristotle's observation made more than two thousand years ago that it is not theory but habit which governs human conduct is often quoted in this connection. No one has applied the principle with greater effect than Th. Wiget, whose A-B-C's of civic education have become famous in Switzerland. According to this veteran teacher, A is instruction on civic affairs; B is the formation of a strong civic will; and C is the habituation to the performance of civic duty. As to B and C, it is apparent that the example of the teachers of Switzerland is more potent for good than any classroom instruction could possibly be. As to A, Wiget holds that direct instruction need not be such as to give the pupil an exhaustive acquaintance with political fact. Patriotic spirit is nourished by three roots: knowledge of various subjects, including *a moderate portion of civics;* an open and co-operative inclination; and a will schooled in right and justice.[68]

While instruction is a part only of civic training, the work done in this way by Swiss teachers, particularly in the public and continuation schools, is on the whole of a high degree of excellence. The quality of middle-school and university instruction in the same field is excellent, but it is desirable that there should be more of it. So far as average knowledge of political fact alone is concerned, it would seem that the Swiss are as well prepared as the citizens of any other democratic state. In widespread interest and the habit of participation their rating is extremely high, as indeed it has need to be considering the extent of the demands made upon them by initiative and referendum, by Landsgemeinden and town meetings. It is impossible to leave this subject without remarking again the rare resourcefulness and enthusiasm with which homeland lore is taught in the primary grades. Coupled with the practice of school excursions, it does more than lay the foundations of civic knowledge: it fosters that deep love of the fatherland which characterizes the Swiss to a greater degree than the citizens of any other country. Love and knowledge together—perhaps one should put it, a great love and not too much knowledge—are a fairly good recipe for family life, and it is this combination which the Swiss bring in abundant measure to the life of that greater family which is the nation.

---

[67] Cf. G. Zinsli, "Zür staatsbürgerlichen Erziehung," in the *Jahresbericht des Bündnerischen Lehrervereins,* XXXIV. Jhrg. (1916), S. 16.

[68] Cf. *op. cit.,* p. 45.

CHAPTER VIII

CHURCHES AND MORAL REFORM

For more than three centuries following the Reformation religious loyalties were added to the manifold centrifugal forces against which the sentiment of Helvetic unity had to make its slow and toilsome way. Deep interest in theological controversy is apparently quite as characteristic of many of the Swiss as of the Scotch people, and it is coupled with a marked willingness, particularly in the Protestant sections of the country, to listen to prophets of innovating sects.[1] Even today many of the latter maintain successful proselyting missions in the principal cities of the country, to the no small discomfiture of the local clergy. Formerly most of these importations came from England, but more recently so large a number of them have been brought in from the United States that the Swiss have come to regard us as equally prolific of inventions whether in the mechanical or in the religious field. Of a considerable portion of the more sober element of the people it may be said, as of Gottfried Keller's "*Sieben Aufrechten,*" that

> seldom is one of them to be seen in the church. On things spiritual they are rarely heard to speak. But . . . . whenever the fatherland is in danger, they begin bit by bit to believe in God, at first each one quietly to himself, then more openly until one of them betrays it to another, when straightway they propagate among themselves a remarkable theology of which the first and only fundamental doctrine is: "Help yourself and God will help you."

Protestant Switzerland takes pride in the fact that it developed its own Reformation, and, further, that of the three cities from which the movement spread, it possesses two, Geneva and Zürich. Of course it owes Calvin to France, but, banished from his own country, he found asylum and the opportunity to develop and apply his system on the shores of Lake Leman. Zwingli, on the other hand, was a thoroughly Swiss product, and it was chiefly his doctrines which, from the two Kappeler wars onward (1529, 1531), were involved in countless dissentions of the Old Confederation. At one time the Diet, the only bond of political unity which the country as a whole then possessed, was divided into two bodies, one Catholic, the other Protestant. In local politics also, religious issues were constantly being contested bitterly, and the division of Appenzell into two half-cantons which persist to the present day was due to irreconcilable confessional antagonisms. Indeed, Switzerland possesses the distinction, if distinction it can be called, of being the only European country which fought out a war primarily on religious grounds during the nineteenth century.

---

[1] The noise-making propensities of the Salvation Army once led to the application, in a very tactful manner to be sure, of a federal silencer. Ecstatic religious revivals are also much enjoyed by the Swiss. For a striking description of one such event, conducted characteristically enough by two English evangelists, see Édouard Rod, *L'incendie,* chap. xi.

Other issues were no doubt at stake in the armed conflict of 1847 over the Sonderbund—ancient historical grudges perpetuated by petty persecution as one party or the other gained the upper hand, which had been greatly inflamed by the intercantonal freebooting expeditions *(Freischarenzüge)* of the forties against the Catholic stronghold of Luzern. In addition, certain antagonisms had arisen between the newly industrialized sections of the country with their liberal political outlook, on the one hand, and, on the other, the interior mountain cantons with their traditional agricultural system and their profoundly conservative outlook on life. Whatever weight may be given by historical interpretation to these contributing factors, the religious issue involved was clearcut and the result a decisive victory for the Protestant forces. With the establishment of the federal constitution of 1848 confessional differences ceased to involve any threat of violence—a tremendous gain considering the turbulence they had caused for more than three hundred years. From 1848 to 1919, when proportional representation went into effect, Switzerland was ruled by the same political forces which had triumphed in the struggle over the Sonderbund. From the point of view of the Catholics, therefore, the civil war of 1847, as one of their leaders put it recently, was a first-class piece of stupidity *(eine Dummheit erster Klasse)*. Nevertheless, by thoroughgoing party organization and by peaceful political agitation they have defended their own ever since, with rare tenacity and success, against the power of the dominant party and within the limits allowed by the constitution. On the other hand, Protestantism as a force in Swiss public life is far from enjoying the influence it possessed prior to 1848.

Consideration of Catholic tactics should not blind one to certain distinctive characteristics of the Protestant defense reaction. On both sides, of course, feeling is still somewhat embittered by memories of past conflicts, particularly those dating from the bloody civil wars of the early Reformation period. Because of that "old, far-off, unhappy time," the teaching of history in Swiss public schools, as we have already had occasion to note, is attended by peculiar difficulties. More recent struggles seem to have exacerbated interconfessional antagonism to a markedly less degree, probably because of the humane manner in which they were waged. Fortunately, the Sonderbund war of 1847 took an infinitesimally small toll of human lives; moreover, the generation which witnessed it has passed away. But stronger by far than all historical considerations, there is a geographical factor of which the Swiss Protestant mind is acutely conscious at every moment. As it happens, all neighboring territories abutting on Switzerland—Italian, South German, French, and Austrian—are overwhelmingly Catholic in population. Swiss Protestants form, as it were, a small island completely surrounded by a sea of Romanism, although, taken by itself, that fact is not of great significance. In spite of it, they outnumbered the Catholics by some 45 per cent from 1848 to 1888. With the increase of immigration, chiefly made up of lower-grade laborers from immediately neighboring territories, which began in the eighties, the ratio swung rapidly to the advantage of the Catholics. As a matter of fact, Protestant preponderance had fallen to less than a third (exactly 32.3 per cent) by 1910. In consequence of the departure of many aliens to join the armies of their respective nations during the World War, something approaching the earlier ratio has been restored, the census of 1920 showing that Protestants outnumbered Catholics by 40.7 per cent. Nevertheless, the situation remains unchanged, of course, so far as the immediate foreign environment is concerned; and at every indication of a renewed flood of immigration Protestants not unnaturally become apprehensive. Politically their feeling is of marked importance; it was largely fear of Catholic preponderance which caused them to oppose annexation of the Austrian province of Vorarlberg, naturally a part of Swiss territory, which apparently might have been had for the asking in 1919. Hence, also, the touchiness shown in such minor matters as the recent re-establishment of a papal nunciature at Bern.

Considering the slight numerical margin held by the Protestant element in Switzerland, an American may well confess amazement at the relative mildness of its anti-Catholic feeling. Although Protestants outnumber Catholics five to one in the United States, we have been shamed by a succession of movements from Know Nothingism and A.P.A.-ism down to the recent recrudescence of the Ku Klux Klan, to say nothing of the horrendous shockers engendered by the national campaign of 1928. To a public opinion so deliberate, well-informed, and judicious as that of Switzerland, frenetic anti-religious organizations and propaganda of the familiar American type are simply beyond the pale. The difference is well illustrated by comparison of the effects produced by similar rumors recently circulated in the two countries. On the one hand, there can be no doubt that the rather bald and unconvincing narratives told in the course of the presidential campaign of 1928 regarding the alleged purpose of the pope to take up his residence at Washington did not fail to influence many votes. In Switzerland, on the other hand, analogous tales go the rounds from time to time, which apparently are not lacking in an air of verisimilitude, to the effect that in case of political difficulties in Italy, the Holy Father might remove to Einsiedeln. Obviously, he might do worse: the pleasant little town with its monastery, the Mecca of pious pilgrims for centuries, has the appearance of being more papist than the pope. But telling this charming fairy story to the average Swiss Protestant lights no fire of battle in his eye; instead, he is likely to smile pityingly and change the subject. Having received so many kings in exile, likewise regicides, one gathers that a fugitive pope would not disturb appreciably the serenity of the Swiss scene.

Leaving the political activities of the Catholic element for discussion under the party system where it clearly belongs, several causes may be indicated for the decline that has occurred in the influence of the reformed churches in spite of the fact that they are still established in most of the cantons. First among these should be noted the increasingly secularized attitude of government in Switzerland.

> Once the reformed church was also qualified to participate in political activities, when it was still a confessional church, when it carried out clerical regulations in which it had the support of the strong arm of the state, when it could offer its counsel to the state which itself was established upon a confessional basis. Since then, conditions have fundamentally changed. The state has been de-confessionalized. The church itself has grown tolerant and has given itself a liberal constitution.[2]

Secondly, the fact that the reformed church is established in many cantons has contributed to caution in political utterances and activities on the part of its clergy and higher officials. In the sections of the country where the Roman Catholic church is established, it has to deal with but one party, a party which is more or less under its own influence and which has been in local control longer than the Democrats in our own "Solid South." Even so, the priesthood is reminded by the laity from time to time that it must not interfere too far with civil administration. In the Protestant sections, on the other hand, parties are more numerous, congregations are divided among them, and the clergy is alleged to be not altogether unmindful of the desirability of avoiding offense to organizations and leaders that hold or may soon gain political power over them. It would be invidious to lay too much stress on the latter point, which involves a calculation of motives the force of which is not measurable; on the other hand, reformed clerical interest is said not only to be rather less occupied than formerly with issues of the day but also to be turning more and more to ethical, metaphysical, and even mystical themes. However this may be, clergymen certainly possess full liberty of preaching, being bound spiritually only by the Evangels. In all questions of doctrine that may arise, the higher authorities of the reformed church are accustomed to act in the most liberal manner and with extreme caution. Ministers of Protestant denominations therefore can, and a few of them do, take an interest in political questions, chiefly such as involve moral considerations. By a curious interpretation of the federal constitution Catholic priests are excluded from membership in the National Council, whereas reformed clergymen are eligible provided they lay aside the cloth during their terms of office.[3] In spite of the political privilege enjoyed by the latter, the percentage of former pastors in the two houses of the federal legislature is extremely low. On the other hand they are elected frequently to local boards of education and charity. In one particular the ministerial office itself may be said to be political in character. Everywhere in Protestant Switzerland pastors of reformed churches are elected by the voters of the ecclesiastical communes with the single exception of Canton Vaud, where they are appointed by the administrative council.

---

[2] Cf. Dr. Alfred Inhelder, "Die evangelische Landeskirche und die Politik," in *Politische Rundschau,* 7. Jhrg., Heft 7 (July, 1928), P. 193. While Dr. Inhelder is obviously bent on preaching a sermon to preachers on the desirability of keeping the church out of politics, he develops admirably the existing relation between the evangelical established churches and contemporary public life in Switzerland.

Although not given habitually to political activities, ministers of reformed denominations sometimes take a lively and more or less effective interest in pending initiative and referendum measures. Many of them pushed the anti-absinth amendment, for example, and have supported subsequent temperance measures; but it must be said that their fervor in opposition to alcohol is far inferior to that developed by the Protestant clergy in the United States. In this connection one need not accuse them of fear lest the large "wet" element in their own congregations take offense: drastic compulsion is quite out of the question in dealing with the liquor problem in Switzerland, and most of the pastors are as little inclined to dry fanaticism in opinion as in practice.

---

[3] Cf. the author's *Government and Parties in Switzerland*, p. 75.

Other moral issues, however, such as the suppression of gambling in casinos, enlist their support in large degree. Moreover, questions involving social justice, especially the labor of women and children, insurance and pension plans and the like, are often handled fearlessly by individual clergymen. Similarly, many pastors have devoted themselves with particular ardor to the promotion of disarmament and international peace. In the hotly contested referendum campaign for the entrance of Switzerland into the League of Nations, for example, large numbers of clergymen, both Protestant and Catholic, were in the thick of the fray, nearly all the former favoring going in while a large element of the latter were opposed. More recently a considerable number of pastors of the reformed church have taken a stand in favor of unilateral disarmament, similar to that of the Geneva Primary Teachers' Union. Without going to extremes of pacifism, the sentiment of the clergy is strongly against war. Thus, in March of 1928, the Federation of Protestant Churches of Switzerland addressed a memorial to the Federal Council praying it to take all possible steps in favor of world-peace, compulsory arbitration, and disarmament. Obviously, this was but a beginning in what may prove to be a campaign for greater activity by the clergy in political life, for in the course of the same year the Federation decided, while continuing its non-partisan attitude, to defend its principles in initiative and referendum votes. To that end it has organized a Protestant press service by which it hopes to reach the newspapers of the country and to influence public opinion effectively.

It is only natural that the conservatives of Switzerland should find the ardor of certain clergymen for sweeping moral and political reforms somewhat disturbing. Still more disturbing is the fact that a considerable number of Protestant pastors are avowed members of the Socialist party. In consequence one hears frequent homilies of a sort by no means unknown in the United States, on the duty of preaching religion pure and undefiled and the crying need of "keeping the pulpit out of politics." Nevertheless, there is a large and refreshing tolerance for clerical radicalism; and, as in the case of school teachers, the suggestion of dismissal as a penalty is seldom, if ever, made. Some there are in conservative circles and among practical politicians who, while regretting keenly all divagations to the left, nevertheless agree that pastors should be permitted to preach freely not only heaven in the hereafter but also any kind of social utopia on earth that may strike their fancy, with the proviso, however, that when any pending proposal is likely to be affected by such utterances a discreet silence should be observed. Lovely as such circumspection would be from the point of view of advocates of things as they are, it cannot be said that the line thus traced is never overstepped. On the other hand, occasional cases are reported of pastors who abandon the ministry in order to devote themselves more freely and effectively to social causes nearest their hearts.

All things considered, however, the relations between the state and the reformed church are much less close and direct than formerly, and apparently the political influence of the latter is still declining. Nevertheless, one must not assume that it counts for nothing in Swiss public life. It is still a cure of souls, although under the rule which counts as members of the established church all residents in a given territory who have not signed a statement to the contrary, many of these souls are habitual absentees, wholly indifferent to the ministrations of their official pastors. Nor is a large measure of latitudinarianism said to be wanting among actual pew-holders. Still, in sermons and in Sunday-school instruction to the young, high standards of virtue and self-devotion are inculcated which are certainly not without effect in forming the good citizen and the finer types of political leadership in Switzerland. As noted above, pastors themselves seldom engage in party activities, but it is a well-known fact that many children reared in rectories have risen to eminence as statesmen. In charitable activities also, the reformed churches achieve valuable results. It is true, however, that the state has invaded this field largely, and that the heavy burden of taxation which it imposes to support public institutions reduces the amount which can be secured by solicitation from the faithful. Church relief work, however, has established its worth, particularly in the launching of experimental undertakings and in all those forms of charitable activity which require discrimination and the human touch rather than large resources and that administrative technique which only the state can command. Disestablishment occurred in Geneva and Urban Basel early in the present century, and for a time it was thought that other cantons might take the same step. So far, however, they have stood firm, nor does there seem to be much interest in the movement at present. In the opinion of some observers general disestablishment might prove a blessing in disguise, resulting in a spiritual renaissance and a great expansion of the influence of the reformed church. As in England, however, many Swiss adherents of the union of church and state uphold it not so much because they think it desirable per se as because in their opinion it opposes a more effective barrier to a unified and politically militant Romanism.

In all probability the last-mentioned argument is well founded. A marked effect of Protestant establishment is that it has checked to a considerable degree the tendency common elsewhere toward the disintegration of reformed bodies into numerous small denominations. One does not find "Middletowns" of 35,000 inhabitants in Switzerland which can boast, if boast be the proper word in this connection, forty-two church buildings housing twenty-eight sects.[3a] Sects there are, as was noted earlier, often so small that they can afford to occupy rented rooms only, but churches of the dominant reformed body are fewer in number, more imposing in architecture, and, what is of much greater significance, supplied by pastors who are better educated and comparatively better paid than the average run of Protestant ministers in American towns of corresponding sizes. Also the reformed churches of Switzerland are more likely to be attended by all classes of people living in the neighborhood. There is not the tendency so often observed in the United States for social segregation to manifest itself in church life, with certain denominations representing the wealthy and others the middle and poorer classes. As a result the Swiss village preacher has the privilege and the difficulty of adjusting his sermons to the needs of the community as a whole, while the city minister must take into account the opinions of a large section of the people in his parish—hence again the need of caution in pulpit utterances on political questions.

In sharp contrast with the Catholics, who are strongly organized politically, there is but one among the minor parties of Switzerland which stands definitely upon a Protestant basis—the Evangelical People's party. At present it has one seat in the National Council and a following of a few thousand voters in the cantons of Zürich and Basel-Stadt. While a religious movement at bottom, the Evangelical People's party nevertheless has a distinctly economic character in that it represents a strong reaction against the growing materialism of Swiss politics. According to one of its principal leaders,

> We stand outside the opposition between private and socialistic economics. We do not hold fundamentally with the ruling private economic order, for it is a very miserable human order. Also, we do not hold fundamentally with the socialistic economic order, for, if it is set up by men of the same quality, it also will be a very miserable order. We hold with the divine order, or at least strive to do so. Whether economic goods remain as the property of individuals or as collective property is not the decisive or saving consideration, but rather that we should look upon them as the property of God and deal with them accordingly.[4]

[3a] R. S. and H. M. Lynd, *Middletown,* chap. xx.

[4] Quoted by Emil Dürr, *Neuzeitliche Wandlungen in der schweizerischen Politik,* p. 57.

As "a plague on both your houses" the foregoing profession of faith is thoroughly successful; but one may perhaps be permitted to doubt whether divine guidance, or scriptural guidance, which it must nowadays of necessity resolve itself into, at all times supplies definite solutions to pending economic and political issues, especially when interpreted by Protestant sectarians. Meanwhile, as Professor Dürr points out, the Evangelical People's party seems fated to waver ineffectively, as texts point now in one, now in the other direction, between the devil of individualism and the deep sea of collectivism.

No Jewish problem of any consequence exists in Switzerland; indeed, there are scarcely enough members of that race in the country to constitute a problem. According to the census of 1920, they numbered, all told, only 20,979, or slightly in excess of one-half of 1 per cent of the total resident population. More than four-fifths of them live in the seven largest cities of Switzerland. Doubtlessly as a result of earlier legal restrictions, now, however, long since swept away, the number of Jews in the inner cantons is extremely small; Nidwalden and Inner Appenzell, for example, each had but one citizen belonging to that "*Konfession*" in 1920.

Not that these old-time legal restrictions were either general or extremely onerous. Although the federal constitution of 1848 established a large degree of freedom of speech, of the press, and of associations, it guaranteed neither Jews nor sectarians (i.e., Christians not belonging to recognized confessions) the free exercise of their religious services, both being left in this respect to the good will of the various cantons. Further, the constitution of that year conferred the right of settlement, but not of communal citizenship, anywhere in Switzerland upon all citizens belonging to Christian confessions, here again, however, leaving Jewish citizens subject to legislation by the cantons, some of which refused them the right of residence while others did not permit them to become owners of real estate. In all probability these two legal discriminations were attributable not so much to any special antipathy felt by the Swiss against their Jewish fellow-citizens as to the fear that a more liberal policy might encourage immigration by members of the latter race from neighboring territories, especially from Alsace.

Largely because of the latter consideration, the federal government refused to enter into favorable commercial treaties offered by Holland and the United States, both of which insisted upon equal rights in Switzerland for their Jewish as for their other nationals. In 1864, however, Emperor Louis Napoleon made the same stipulation, which was accepted because of certain concessions highly advantageous to the Swiss in connection with the sale of watches, silk ribbons, and millinery goods in France. Having conferred such rights upon French Jews, it was, of course, impossible to withhold them longer from Swiss Jews; accordingly, an amendment to the constitution, the famous "*Judenartikel,*" was passed by the chambers and upon submission to referendum, January 14, 1866, was adopted by a popular vote of 170,032 to 149,041, and by a cantonal vote of 12½ to 9½. Meanwhile, federal pressure was exerted to compel certain obstinate cantons to admit Jews to communal citizenship, Aargau being the last to yield, in 1877.

Subsequently there have been but few manifestations of anti-Semitic feeling in Switzerland. The most notable was the passage of an initiative amendment to the federal constitution in 1893, prohibiting "the killing of animals without benumbing before the drawing of blood" (Art. 25*bis*). Originally promoted by the S.P.C.A., this proposal was taken up joyously by the enemies of the Jews and, in spite of a recommendation by the chambers that it be defeated, was carried by a popular vote of 191,527 to 127,701 and by a cantonal vote of 11½ to 10½. Participation was so low, however (47.6 per cent), that this expression of the sovereign will had the appearance of a fluke, the anti-Semitic element turning out in full force while their opponents, lulled to a false sense of security that so foolish a constitutional initiative could not possibly be accepted, remained at home. In the end, however, the joke was on the proponents, since the federal legislature has refused steadfastly to provide any penalty for violations of the amendment.

Some slight social discrimination of a racial character there is, to be sure, and minor manifestations of anti-Semitism occur from time to time, but they make scarcely a ripple on the surface of Swiss politics. During the World War considerable bitterness arose regarding the alleged unfair and unneutral practices resorted to by certain Jewish traders. Two propagandist sheets, anti-Semitic and also anti-Masonic in character, are published: the *Pilori* of Geneva, and the *Schweizerbanner* of Zürich, the latter purporting to be the organ of an association known as the Swiss Homeguards *(Schweizerischer Heimatwehr)*. In wild credulity, dire prophecy, and complete lack of logic both are reminiscent of Mr. Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent,* now happily defunct. Early in 1928 the editor of the *Schweizerbanner* created a mild stir by republishing an advertisement, later proved to be a fake although clearly spurious on its face, which he attributed to a Jewish benevolent association in Basel. One passage of this precious document proposed that indigent members of that race should be taken care of by giving them official positions in Swiss courts, administrative offices, and the army. Taken sharply to task for so wholly unconvincing a forgery—his paper being referred to as a "*Pogromjournal*," which rather exaggerated its influence—the editor of the *Schweizerbanner* sued for libel, obtaining a verdict in the district court of first instance carrying with it a fine of 70 francs and, as further penalty, the publication of the decision. Upon appeal the cantonal court confirmed the fine but remitted publication; upon further appeal the Federal Court remitted the fine also, adding the unconsolatory remark that one who attaches himself to a movement which without concealment preaches attack upon certain sections of the population must expect to be attacked in turn. The incident rather neatly illustrates the fact that as one passes from lower to higher circles of intelligence in Switzerland the strength of anti-Semitic feeling markedly declines—not, however, that it is anywhere virulent. Roman Catholics in other European countries often go to extremes in this form of race antagonism, but their fellow-communicants in Switzerland are much less bitter. Indeed, it is said that in certain cities, e.g., Zürich, where both are in a minority, Catholics sometimes support Jewish candidates and Jews sometimes support Catholic candidates in electoral contests.

THE FIGHT AGAINST ALCOHOLISM IN SWITZERLAND

Among the moral reforms in which the churches of Switzerland are interested, the fight against alcoholism is of particular importance. Not that the movement is confined to religious circles—on the contrary, as noted above, certain of the clergy prefer to avoid identifying themselves with it, and many church members are opposed to reform legislation in this field. Moreover, large numbers of school teachers, doctors, editors, and politicians, including among the latter not a few leaders of the Socialist party, are active in combating the evils of alcoholism. Nevertheless, certain temperance organizations have a pronounced religious character, e.g., the Swiss Blue Cross League founded in 1877 by Pastor Rochat, which now has over 30,000 members; and the Swiss League of Catholic Abstainers founded by Bishop Egger and others in 1895, with some 10,000 members at present.[5] It is noteworthy that the Swiss have developed nothing similar to our own Anti-Saloon League. Their pronounced opposition to the use of money in politics would make an organization of that character worse than useless.

---

[5] Figures quoted from J. Odermatt's excellent *Taschenbuch für Alkoholgegner* (Lausanne: Alkoholgegner-Verlag, 1924), p. 179. There is also a Methodist Abstinence League with 2,000 members. In addition to church organizations, Odermatt lists the following: Good Templar Order, 4,300 members; Swiss League of Women Abstainers, 1,600 members; Swiss League in Opposition to Alcohol, 1,650 members; League of Socialist Abstainers, 1,100 members; Swiss League of Abstinent Teachers, 1,100 members; and the Swiss League of Railroad Abstainers, 900 members. Most

As a rule, leaders of the temperance movement in Switzerland place their reliance rather in education and moral restraint than in prohibitory measures. On one occasion, indeed, the people were stirred to support an initiative proposal of the latter character—the famous Absinth Amendment of July 5, 1908, which was carried by a popular vote of 241,078 to 138,669 and by 20 to 2 cantonal votes. Considering that all other alcoholic beverages were left untouched by this enactment, its enforcement would seem to present no great difficulties; nevertheless, one does hear of occasional inns and drinking places where absinth is to be had surreptitiously.

But the fundamental constitutional amendment in this field (Art. 32*bis*), was that of October 25, 1885, when the Swiss people, by a popular vote of 230,250 to 157,463 and a cantontal vote of 15 to 7, empowered the federal government to regulate the manufacture and sale of distilled liquors. Two years later a law, based on this amendment, providing for a federal alcohol monopoly also ran the gauntlet of the referendum, being carried by a popular vote of 267,122 to 138,496. Probably the somewhat larger favor which it received at the hands of the people, who notoriously dislike monopolies of every sort, was due to the arrangement whereby the federal government agreed to divide the whole net profits of the monopoly among the cantons in proportion to their population.

There has been considerable argument as to whether the administration of the alcohol monopoly reduced the consumption of distilled liquor in Switzerland, the better opinion seeming to be that it had a slightly beneficial effect in that direction.[6] Unfortunately, however, the constitutional amendment of 1885 expressly exempted from federal control the distillation of liquors from wine, fruits, berries, and roots. At that time a comparatively small number of peasants utilized their surplus fruits and berries in this way, but it was not anticipated that any considerable competition with the alcohol monopoly would be caused thereby. Subsequently, however, the production of Swiss orchards and fruit farms increased far beyond the demands of the market. More and more of it was turned into brandies and liqueurs, of ex-

---

of the foregoing are federated in the Swiss Central Organization to Combat Alcoholism, with offices at Avenue Dapples 5, Lausanne.

[6] On this point cf. the author's *Government and Politics of Switzerland,* p. 187.

cellent quality to be sure, but also of high potence and retailed at incredibly low prices.[7] The result has been a recrudescence of the problem of alcoholism in an aggravated form. Incidentally also, the profits of the federal monopoly, which had grown to nearly ten million francs by the year 1910, decreased thereafter; in 1923 and 1924 it actually incurred deficits of five and four million francs, respectively.[8]

It would be hard to exaggerate the evil social consequences resulting from the flood of cheap alcohol which has inundated Switzerland recently. Figures for 1924 show the total amount expended in that year for intoxicating liquors of all kinds, including light wines and beer as well as brandies, was six hundred million francs, or only nine millions less than the total spent for bread and milk. In some rural cantons schnapps costs less than milk and is said to be used to flavor the morning coffee of whole families, including school children. At times the story takes the form that it is the coffee which is used to flavor the schnapps. One gains the impression that the overconsumption of alcohol would have even worse consequences were it not for the powers of resistance built up by past generations of valiant dram-drinkers. In spite of the heavy tippling which is constantly going on, however, intoxicated men are seen in public places no more commonly than in "prohibition" America. Evidently, the carrying capacity of the Swiss is prodigious. Certainly, they display relatively the largest number and assortment of alcoholic noses, red and bulbous, to be found, not in captivity, anywhere on the planet.

Responsible Swiss statesmen are fully aware of the grave dangers involved in the present situation. Federal Councilor Guiseppe Motta declared on August 1, 1927, taking for the occasion of his speech, strikingly enough, the official banquet of the Wine Growers' Festival at Vevey: "Alcoholism is a scourge which destroys our health and that of future generations. The duty of remedying this condition is one of the most important and most urgent that I know." In an address before the New Helvetic Society delivered a year later, one of his colleagues of the Federal Council, Jean-Marie Musy, who has had the courage to put himself at the head of legislative reform movements in this field, stated the facts in the case sharply and succinctly as follows:

---

[7] One might expect that brandies produced in so many small peasant stills would be adulterated. On the contrary, they are said to be so pure and of such high alcoholic content that peasants and mountain-climbers do not hesitate to use them as emergency antiseptics on fresh wounds.

[8] In subsequent years profits have again resulted, the figure for 1928, according to the *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz* for that year, p. 315, being 6,606,353 francs.

> Switzerland is the only country in which the distillation of fruit brandy is free.
>
> Switzerland is further the only country in which the sale of [such] brandy takes place without internal revenue taxation.
>
> Switzerland is also the country with the cheapest brandy.
>
> While other drinks have increased in price, in some cases many-fold, brandy is cheaper today than before the war.
>
> Switzerland is also therefore the country in which the most brandy is drunk.

Following this brusque indictment Federal Councilor Musy pointed out that, according to recent statistical reports, the annual consumption of brandy containing 40 per cent or more of alcohol in Switzerland amounted to between 26 and 30 million liters, or from 6½ to 7½ liters per head of the population. Nor did he mince matters as to the consequences of so torrential a downpour upon public health, public morals, and economic efficiency. With the fall in the price of brandy statistics of the federal finance department show a corresponding increase in mortality, in certain forms of disease, and in commitments to insane asylums. The number of cases of death with alcoholism as the principal cause rose from 87 in 1919 to 405 in 1921 and has subsequently remained at the latter figure. Worst affected are men between thirty-five and fifty-five, precisely at the age when families stand most in need of their support. Country communes show higher mortality rates from alcoholism than cities; thus the fresh blood flowing from the former to the latter is poisoned at its source. Brandy and tuberculosis go hand in hand; the state spends millions to combat tuberculosis yet permits one of its chief contributing causes to rage unchecked. In 1926 three-fifths of the male inmates of Swiss penal institutions were found to have suffered from the abuse of alcohol; a third of them committed the crime for which they were imprisoned while under the influence of liquor. Poor relief costs Switzerland eighty million francs annually, of which a fourth, perhaps even a third, goes for the support of alcoholics and their needy dependents.

Evils so gross and palpable naturally called forth a flood of criticism from temperance societies and leaders of public opinion. Apparently, the easiest solution of the problem was to extend the control of the federal alcohol monopoly over all distilled liquors, including the fruit brandies produced by innumerable small peasant stills. Even during the World War a postulate to that effect was introduced in the National Council. It received the approval of the Federal Council in 1919, the amendment prepared by that body subsequently passing the chambers. Submitted to referendum on June 3, 1923, however, it was defeated by a popular vote of 360,397 to 262,688, and by a cantonal vote of 12 to 10.

Unquestionably, temperance reformers were surprised and for the time being profoundly discouraged by the check administered to them in 1923. Nevertheless, they soon took up the work with redoubled energy. Even prior to the vote on the constitutional referendum, petitions had been circulated for an initiative permitting local option in cantons and communes. On March 13, 1922, the Federal Council announced that 145,761 signatures, nearly three times the required number, had been secured. However, popular decision on the initiative was postponed, first to leave a clear field for the Alcohol Monopoly Amendment of 1923, and later in order to give the federal authorities another chance to solve the problem in their own way. More than seven years have now elapsed without submission of the Local Option amendment to the people, certainly one of the longest delays of an initiative petition on record.

Meanwhile, as intimated above, the Federal Council again attacked the problem, the chief of the finance department in particular, Jean-Marie Musy, devoting himself wholeheartedly to its solution. After mature deliberation a second amendment to the constitution was worked out. Not daring to go so far as the measure of 1923, it provided that the production of distilled liquors for commercial purposes from fruits, roots, and the like should be turned over to private firms licensed for that purpose and obligated to sell their product to the state at fixed prices. This device avoided the odium of monopoly, while at the same time the government acquired control of the market and, by advancing retail prices, could secure additional revenue and also reduce consumption. In the hope of disarming rural opposition peasants were permitted to continue distillation but only of the fruits raised on their own farms and for the consumption of their own households. The government was also given power to buy up private stills and to forbid the erection of new ones, thus reducing the excessively large number now in operation throughout the country.

Passed by the chambers, the foregoing amendment was submitted to referendum vote, May 12, 1929. In spite of the moderation of the new proposal it was defeated even more decisively than the measure of 1923, the popular vote against it being 463,751 to 225,406 and the cantonal vote 21½ to ½, Basel-Stadt alone showing a majority in its favor.

Analysis of the referendum results both of 1923 and of 1929 shows that the heaviest opposition to reform comes, as one would expect, from the rural cantons, particularly from communes where private stills are numerous. The peasant's economic condition has been a hard one of recent years, and he feels that he cannot afford to give up the small income derived from the distillation of his surplus fruit. As a hard-headed person accustomed, as were his ancestors for many generations, to fortify himself for heavy outdoor labors by an occasional dram, he is not much impressed by the fulminations of temperance reformers, nor, indeed, by the warnings issued by leaders of his own party, most of whom are fully aware of the widespread social evils involved in the present situation. Regardless of all argument and sermonizing, therefore, most of the peasants stand pat on their right, as the popular saying has it, to distill "*was, wo, und wie.*"

Innkeepers also, who are thoroughly organized and by no means devoid of popularity, threw the whole weight of their influence against the amendments of 1923 and 1929. Like the peasants they find themselves in a very uncomfortable economic situation, primarily due to the fact that there are far too many licensed establishments in the country; consequently they are strongly opposed to measures which, by increasing the cost of liquor, might diminish their trade.

Antagonism to liquor legislation is not confined to rural voters and innkeepers, however. In spite of the strong stand for reform taken by certain socialist leaders, heavy majorities were cast against the two amendments by the industrial districts of larger Swiss cities. Here the motive unquestionably was opposition to higher prices for anything, including brandy.

Motives of a less selfish character played a part in the defeat of the two amendments—for example, states' rights sentiment, and opposition to monopoly or federal control. There can be no doubt that the federal government itself, owing to high prices charged by its alcohol monopoly for denatured alcohol as well as for beverage liquors, was in a somewhat weak moral position. Nor was opposition on this score altogether removed by the argument that future profits might be devoted to old-age insurance and other worthy social causes. Further, not a few members of temperance societies objected to the amendment of 1929 as not going far enough, or because they believed the long-shelved local option initiative a better first step. Finally, it must be remembered that Swiss citizens of all classes are devoted to personal liberty to a degree unusual in other larger democracies. Following the "victories" of 1923 and 1929, celebrations were held in many inns throughout the country, at which the national hymn was sung in honor of the preservation of freedom.

So the matter rests. Twice the great mass of the Swiss people have vetoed anti-alcohol measures submitted to them by their own representatives in the federal chambers, the second time more emphatically than the first. Twice they have disregarded tons of advice proffered by their pastors and schoolmasters, their physicians and journalists—in fact, by virtually all their leaders who approach public questions intelligently and conscientiously. On other issues the electorate has occasionally manifested the same independence and will probably do so again. Nor does it follow that the voters are fundamentally mistaken when they go their own way. For one thing, their action in 1923 and 1929 means that they will have nothing to do with prohibitory measures in advance of public sentiment, and thus will escape the tyranny and corruption which always result from such premature enactments. For another, it means that precisely because of their ability to reach their own decisions—if need be "to make their own mistakes," as William Jennings Bryan put it—the Swiss are better qualified for self-government than other more docile peoples. One is often struck with the strength of the conviction held by the common man in Switzerland that he and his like rule the country. So they do, indeed, whenever they are sufficiently interested to take up an issue. And the confidence they feel in themselves is materially enhanced by the occasional overthrow of a carefully prepared and much recommended government measure.

No feature of the present situation with regard to anti-alcohol legislation is more typical of Swiss democratic feeling than the attitude taken by the proponents of reform. Badly beaten as they have been, apparently no one thinks of giving up the fight. The electorate has been known to reverse itself before, as, for example, on proportional representation, railroad nationalization, and army reform; and in the fulness of time may be expected to do so on the liquor question. There is a minimum of vain regret regarding the referendum votes of 1923 and 1929, for, after all, temperance reformers are democrats even more than they are temperance reformers. The line taken is rather that of self-criticism. In post-referendum heart-searching the conclusion has been reached that hitherto anti-liquor campaigns have been characterized too largely by an attitude of "*von oben herab*," i.e., from above downward. Too many leaders, too many of the intelligentsia, runs the formula, hence not enough votes at the polls. Therefore, the next step is plain—more work with the masses, more education of the masses before another test of strength is essayed. Years may be needed to fight it out on that line; but only on that line can a satisfactory, that is, a democratic, result be attained.

A foreign observer is particularly impressed by the almost complete absence of fanaticism shown by the Swiss in dealing with the liquor question. Certainly conditions are bad enough to justify strong feeling on the part of all who are possessed of a social conscience. Yet even those who feel most strongly regarding the evils of drink realize that reason and persuasion alone are the only weapons which will prevail in the end. Although many Swiss women are outspoken antagonists of the liquor interests, they devote themselves, without exception, to peaceful propaganda and relief work.[9] No Carrie Nation has risen among them; hatchet heroines are unthinkable among so stolid a people and, if they did emerge, would receive jail sentences, not publicity and applause. Even by strong temperance reformers the remark is frequently made that each man is in a position to make up his own mind on the alcohol question, that his conviction one way or the other is a matter of conscience with him, and that, as such, it should receive somewhat the same respect and toleration from others that they accord his religious beliefs. There is a conspicuous disposition to be fair even to opponents whose selfish interests are involved. Confiscation of the property of liquor producers and dealers is not thought of; on the contrary, it is recognized now that no solution of the problem has any chance of success, nor, indeed, deserves to succeed, unless it conciliates the interests of peasants and innkeepers.

In spite of the temporary political setbacks of 1923 and 1929, an enormous amount of good work has been and is being carried on to combat the evils of alcoholism. Moderate temperance advocates employ every device to turn drinkers from cheap and heavy brandies to the light wines and beer of the country. In all the principal cities of Switzerland there are central offices for the care of drunkards *(Trinkerfürsorgestellen)*, where alcoholics may obtain free medical and legal aid, be directed to sanatoria, and encouraged to join temperance societies, and where, also, arrangements may be made for the protection and support of dependent members of their families. Housewives are urged to use more fruit either fresh or preserved in their dietaries; unfermented fruit juices or soluble powders made from them are widely advertised. Alcohol-free restaurants multiply on every hand, being supported by women's organizations and patronized largely by women. Steeped in the writings of Pestalozzi, who criticized unmercifully the drinking habits of his fellow-countrymen of the eighteenth century, the schoolmasters of Switzerland, especially those who belong to the League of Abstinent Teachers, lose no opportunity of impressing upon their young charges the dangers of alcoholism. Numerous clubs of students and of young people, some of them independent, others affiliated with adult organizations, have been formed, with a total enrolment in 1929 of nearly seventy thousand members. There are clubs of abstinent bicyclists, of abstinent gymnasts, of abstinent tourists; there is even a club of abstinent peasants founded in 1923, which devotes itself particularly to promoting the non-alcoholic consumption of fruits. Sixteen journals, eight in German, seven in French, one in Italian, most of them issued monthly, spread the gospel of temperance reform. Among recent curiosities of anti-alcoholic propaganda was one contributed by the federal postal service. It took the form of a device used to cancel stamps showing at one side a bottle decorated with skull and crossbones and on the other the words: "Schnapps ruins the family and the race." In short, every possible form of persuasion is employed which may cause citizens to abstain from the abuse of alcohol. It is a pleasure to report that, in the opinion of seasoned observers, all this effort is bearing fruit; that, in spite of the temptation due to the low price of brandy, consumption of heavy distilled liquors is beginning to fall off slowly but surely. While all honor is due so remarkable an achievement, nevertheless it remains true that alcoholism is a real scourge in Switzerland, nullifying much of the good work done by church, school, army, and other social agencies; debasing the citizenship of the country more than any other single evil. The solution of the problem will afford a real test of the virtue and intelligence of Swiss democracy.

---

[9] See A. Gillabert-Randin, "La femme et la revision de la législation sur l'alcool, in the *Bulletin,* New Helvetic Society, Jhrg. 12 (September-October, 1926), S. 121.

POSTSCRIPT ON ALCOHOLISM

Considering the severity of the foregoing animadversions on alcoholism in Switzerland, it is an especial pleasure to report that, as these pages are going through the press, a victory of considerable proportions has been won by the temperance forces. Much sooner than was anticipated after their defeat in 1929, the reformers succeeded in redrafting a constitutional amendment and secured its passage by the chambers, submission to referendum taking place on April 6, 1930. The result was decisive, their proposal being adopted by a popular vote of 491,109 to 320,046 and by a cantonal vote of 17 to 5. On one occasion only, the capital-tax-levy initiative of 1922, has participation been higher than the 80 per cent recorded on the alcohol amendment of the current year.

The new article (32*bis*) thus added to the Swiss constitution was hammered out in the course of numerous conferences at which all interest groups were represented. Each of the latter insisted upon guaranties, and in consequence the amendment is exceptionally long, containing much matter that is scarcely of constitutional importance. Nevertheless, the resulting confidence felt by peasants, innkeepers, and others contributed largely to the success won at the polls. Briefly the amendment provides that the production and sale of fruit brandies is to be regulated by federal legislation; private distillers of such liquors are obliged to sell, and the central government to buy, their product; fruit and other special brandies are to be taxed; the consumption of table fruit and of non-alcoholic fruit drinks is to be encouraged, while the consumption of fruit brandy is to be discouraged; finally, one-half the profits derived from the new system are to be divided among the cantons according to population, 10 per cent to be used by them in combating alcoholism, the other half being retained by the federation for the benefit of old-age pension and survivors' insurance funds.

One can scarcely repress a smile at the deft skill with which the new alcohol amendment was so drawn as to gain every ounce of support from all groups in interest. Peasants were made happy by permitting them to continue to distil from their own products, wholly free of tax, all the brandy needed for household use. If, however, they should wish to quit the business, the federation stands ready to purchase their apparatus at a fair price. While peasants lose the right to sell home-made fruit brandies to all and sundry, they are guaranteed a purchaser for their surplus in the government, which agrees to pay them six cents more per liter than the present wholesale price. Moreover, they hope to profit considerably by government purchase of fruit for its own distillation, by lower freight rates on fruit for table use, and by other federal concessions designed to encourage the consumption of their product in non-alcoholic form. Innkeepers were induced to support the amendment by the prohibition against the sale of fruit brandies by peasants direct to consumers, which cut into their own trade, and by the further prohibition against the sale of such liquor by small dealers and peddlers generally. From a fiscal point of view, the federal government was more than satisfied because it can recoup itself readily for the cost of peasant liquors and fruits by higher revenue taxes and by increasing the price at which it sells fruit brandies to licensed dealers. All together, an annual net profit is anticipated from the new system estimated conservatively at 23,000,000 francs. Any tendency on the part of the states' right element to oppose the amendment was averted by providing generously that half the foregoing profit should be handed over to the cantons. Since the great majority of Swiss citizens, particularly those in modest circumstances, are keenly interested in old-age pensions and survivors' insurance, many votes were doubtless gained by the clause devoting the remaining half of the profits to these worthy causes. While the "*Abstinenzler*" were somewhat disgruntled because the amendment was not so drastic as they desired, nevertheless they were obliged to concede that it went as far in their favor as was consistent with success at the polls. Also, now that government control has been established, they may look forward to a doubling or even a trebling of the retail price of fruit brandies, and cherish the pious hope that consumers will turn from such fiery liquors to light wines and beer. No one seems to be left with a grievance except the hardened topers, who will have to pay more for their *Kirschwasser* if they insist upon having it; yet even they may console themselves with the thought that in the future their vice is to contribute to the relief of the aged, the widow, and the orphan. So cleverly, indeed, was the amendment drawn that it met with no organized opposition. All parties urged their adherents to vote for it save the Communists alone; undoubtedly the antagonism of the latter gained much conservative support for the proposal.

Next to its interest as a strategic advance in the long and hard-fought campaign against alcoholism, the new amendment deserves attention because it illustrates admirably the methods of direct legislation in Switzerland. Opponents of the initiative and referendum are accustomed to make much of the argument that these democratic devices afford too little play for that sweetly reasonable discussion, followed by judicious amendment, which is presumed to be carried on in legislative halls. Whatever force the objection may possess elsewhere, certainly the practice of the Swiss, particularly as revealed in such instances as the alcohol amendment, offers large opportunity for adaptations to meet every segment of public opinion. In their country constitutional amendments and legislative acts are not hastily drawn merely to please some particular band of fanatics and then handed out to the people with a gruff "Take it or leave it." When interest groups formulate their demands too narrowly, the answering "no" from the Swiss electorate is interpreted, if overwhelming, as a stop signal. If the opposing majority is not hopelessly large, the next step is to call in representatives of some of the hostile groups, thresh out the matter in detail with them, make the necessary compromises and adjustments, then test the temper of the people again. Sometimes, as in the case of the alcohol amendment, two or three trials are necessary before a combination sufficiently broad to be successful is effected. Legislative processes of this character are even better examples of government by discussion than are the ordinary practices of purely representative legislatures.

LICENSED GAMBLING

Although the fight against licensed gambling does not attract so great a share of public attention as that against alcoholism, it has enlisted much the same group of moral supporters. Apparently, the former issue was settled by the constitution of 1874, which provided (Art. 35) for the cancellation of existing concessions within a period of three years. By amendment in 1920 this provision was made more definite and inclusive, a clause being added for the suppression of all gambling establishments within a period of five years. At the same time the people rejected a counter proposal of the federal chambers, doubtless inspired by the hotel owners' association, which would have opened a loophole for games of chance "affected with a public interest," i.e., presumably those already established in tourist centers.

Constitution and laws to the contrary notwithstanding, it is a matter of common knowledge that gambling went merrily on in five or six Swiss cantons, the officials of which winked the other eye while federal authorities abstained cannily from interference. Curiously enough from an American point of view, charges of police bribery have not been made in this connection; apparently, toleration was practiced because of local sentiment favorable to the hotel interest. In 1928 the latter made another effort, this time successfully, to legitimatize its position. An initiative euphoniously baptized "for the maintenance of casinos and the development of tourism" was brought forward, permitting cantonal governments under certain conditions dictated by the public interest to license such games of chance as had been customary as late as the spring of 1925. The amendment was also sugar-coated by a clause handing over to the federation one-quarter of the gross receipts of gambling to be used for the relief of victims of natural calamities or for works of general utility. After a vigorous campaign pro and con the initiative carried, on December 2, 1928, by a popular vote of 296,395 to 274,528 and by cantonal vote of 14½ to 7½.

Naturally, reform organizations were surprised and stunned by this result. As usual, however, while submitting to the popular will of the moment, they have reformed their lines for a campaign of education and at the earliest opportunity will challenge the enemy to a new test of strength. There are certain features of the present situation which are distinctly discreditable to the Swiss: first, the acceptance by the federal government of a *pourboire* amounting to a fourth of the total gambling receipts of the country; second, the fact that the concession was granted to the hotel interests, not at a time of depression, but when their business was exceedingly profitable and growing more so; third, and worst of all, the evident intent of these interests to spoil the Egyptians in their midst. It is not implied that the roulette wheels open to the public at Swiss casinos are crooked; on the contrary, they are as honest as such devices can be, of course with the chances sufficiently weighted in favor of the proprietors to insure large and steady profits.

A foreigner finds it slightly nauseating to read Swiss arguments favorable to gambling establishments which assume that they will be patronized almost exclusively by tourists. In the casinos themselves, one notes placards announcing that "in general they are reserved for foreigners"; that "citizens may be expelled or forbidden entry by police order"; that "children of school age are forbidden entrance even when accompanied by adults, although minors from sixteen to twenty years of age may be admitted when so accompanied"; that "students and those in military service as privates or non-commissioned officers are not allowed to enter." Regardless of such arguments and rules, it is certain that the Swiss government cannot license gambling without opening up centers of moral contagion dangerous to its own citizenship, particularly to the young and to persons of weak character. To be sure, the latter are relatively few in number; nevertheless, they exist in Switzerland as elsewhere. Moreover, they will be in constant contact with local gambling establishments, whereas tourists are birds of passage.

Except perhaps occasionally for the spectacle they afford as focal centers of human folly, roulette wheels will have no lure for the great majority of honest, hardworking, cautious, and saving citizens. It is precisely the existence of the foregoing qualities in the mass of Swiss people, however, which makes the presence among them of officially tolerated gambling almost laughably incongruous. Even the hotel keepers of the country are so conspicuously honest and dignified in all other relations that their present determination to maintain games of chance in casinos is distinctly out of character. In the end they may find it poor business; certainly in their advertising literature they do not make a point of the facilities generously supplied foreigners to lose money while sojourning in their palatial establishments. Meanwhile, they expose themselves to the acrid criticism of extreme moralistic writers who are already too much inclined to see in the tourist traffic "a grave menace to the soul of the Swiss people, not to mention such infamous stains as the gambling resorts."[10]

---

[10] Leonhard Ragaz, *Die Neue Schweiz*, p. 194.

CHAPTER IX

SWISS FAMILY LIFE AND THE WOMAN MOVEMENT

FAMILY LIFE

Married life in Switzerland presents something of a paradox. On the one hand, the country has the highest divorce-rate known to Europe: on the other hand, there can be no doubt of the essential stability of the Swiss family as an institution, nor of its profoundly educative influence.

Americans, at least, cannot afford to criticize the Swiss divorce record. According to figures for the year 1924, there was in the United States 1 divorce for every 6.9 marriages. For Switzerland the corresponding ratio was 1 in 11.3, as compared with 1 in 21 for France, 1 in 24 for Germany, 1 in 30 for Norway, and 1 in 96 for Great Britain.[1]

Divorce is not only common but is also rapidly increasing in Switzerland. The number of cases in 1927 was 2,500, as compared with 1,616 for 1913 and 1,011 for 1897. Between the cantons variations in the rate occur wider even than those between the states of the American union. In agricultural and in Catholic sections divorce is rare; for example, Nidwalden and Inner Appenzell got through the year 1927 without a single case, and similar instances are by no means rare. For the same year the ratio of divorces to marriages for the whole country was 1 in 11.4. But in the greater urban centers it was twice as high, e.g., Geneva, 1 in 4.6; Basel City, 1 in 5.6; while in the populous canton of Zürich, which, like Basel, is largely Protestant, the ratio was 1 in 7.5.[2]

Naturally, Swiss theologians find much food for melancholy reflection in the figures quoted above. In other circles the matter is taken quite calmly; as a rule, intelligent Swiss citizens are unaware of the fact that their divorce-rate is the highest in Europe. Newspapers seldom editorialize about the "divorce problem"; better still, they seldom feature sensational cases on their way through courts. For this apparent lack of journalistic enterprise and "human-interest" stories the explanation is simple. A very large majority of Swiss cases occur in the humbler ranks of society, although it is said that divorce is becoming more common among the well-to-do classes. Legal processes are simple and not at all costly. If a couple appear before a justice of the peace acting as a mediator *(Vermittler)*, it is not necessary to employ a lawyer. Moreover, the grounds alleged are, for the most part, sordid and commonplace, and wholly devoid of news value, except from the point of view of tabloid editors. In a country such as Switzerland, where extreme economy is necessary to successful conjugal life, the underlying cause of most divorces is the husband's deficiency as a "provider" or the wife's incapacity as a housekeeper. Tolerant justices usually recognize either of these conditions, especially when complicated by alcoholism, as constituting "*Zerrütung des ehelichen Verhältnisses*,"[3] the German-Swiss equivalent for our American "incompatibility." Three-quarters of the Swiss divorces of 1927 were granted on this ground; adultery being the cause of only one-eighth of the cases of that year.

---

[1] *New International Year Book, 1925,* p. 411.

[2] *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1927,* pp. 50, 61.

TABLE VII

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND EXCESS OF BIRTHS OVER DEATHS IN SWITZERLAND, 1871–1927

YEARS	PER 1,000 INHABITANTS		
	Births	Deaths	Excess of Births over Deaths
1871–80	30.7	23.4	7.3
1881–90	28.1	21.8	6.3
1891–1900	28.1	19.0	9.1
1901–10	26.9	16.8	10.1
1911–20	20.9	14.6	6.3*
1921	20.8	12.7	8.1
1922	19.6	12.9	6.7
1923	19.4	11.8	7.6
1924	18.8	12.5	6.3
1925	18.4	12.2	6.2
1926	18.2	11.7	6.5
1927	17.4	12.3	5.1

* The figures for this decade were of course influenced by the war, and even more markedly by the terrible influenza epidemic of 1918, for which year the death-rate leaped suddenly to 19.3. Incidentally, it was the only year in the whole period covered which showed an excess (0.6 per 1,000) of deaths over births.

As in European countries generally, the birth-rate of Switzerland reached a maximum in the seventies and has been declining ever since, until it is now nearly as low as in France.

Following the World War there was a slight recovery, birthrates of 20.9 and 20.8 per 1,000 of the population being reached in 1920 and 1921, respectively, but subsequently the tendency has again been steadily downward. Nor is the decline found only among urban dwellers; on the contrary, it is quite as marked in many rural districts. Explanations of the trend indicated by the foregoing figures are much the same in Switzerland as elsewhere and need not be restated here. It may be observed, however, that in certain parts of the country contraceptives are quite openly advertised.

---

[3] Swiss Civil Code, Art. 142.

One striking consequence of the decline of the Swiss birth-rate is the fact that in various cities, and in some agricultural districts as well, the building of new schoolhouses has ceased to be so large an item in local budgets as it was before the turn of the century. On the other hand, during the period covered in Table VII the death-rate of Switzerland has fallen even more sharply than the birth-rate. As a matter of fact, the excess of the latter over the former was greatest, not during the seventies, but in the decades 1891–1900 and 1901–10. If a low death-rate is the best single criterion of the well-being of a nation, Switzerland apparently is soon to take rank with the most favored few which lose annually less than 10 per 1,000 inhabitants.[4]

While undoubtedly significant, bare statistics showing mounting divorce rates and declining birth-rates may give a quite false impression. Turning to the other side of the shield, the normal Swiss family presents a picture of deep, although not demonstrative, affection, of strong co-operative effort and extreme stability. In rural sections domestic life is firmly rooted in the soil. The most casual traveler through the country must be impressed by the immense amount of labor performed in the fields by men, women, and children working in common. Closer contact with peasant life reveals the fact that not only the care of crops and domestic animals but all the wider interests of the family, such as the education of children, the relations of its members to church and state, and other social organizations, are decided by fireside discussions. In this connection it is significant that Swiss advocates of votes for women explain the failure of the cause to make greater headway in agricultural districts as due in large part to the fact that peasant women generally are satisfied with their share in household management and with the representation of their outside interests by the husband.

Democratic to the core, the Swiss nevertheless take an extreme pride in their ancestors and family alliances. In part, the fact may be related to aristocratic tendencies earlier prevalent within the country and to the support given such tendencies by military service at the courts of neighboring monarchies. For example, Symonds mentions one family long resident in Graubünden and now engaged in the prosaic occupation of hotel-keeping, the records of which show that from 1400 to 1800 thirty-eight of its members fought in the French, Austrian, Venetian, Dutch, Milanese, Spanish, English, and Neapolitan armies, serving in every capacity from that of private soldier to field marshall. Among its list of honors are one earldom of the Empire, two German baronies, and a French title of nobility, dating from the reign of Henry IV.[5] To a similar family of the same canton belonged the late Theophil von Sprecher (1850–1927), chief of the general staff of the Swiss army and in private life farmer and railroad president, who traced his descent from the fourteenth century, counting among his progenitors not only soldiers and diplomats but also judges, legislators, administrators, preachers, professors, historians, and novelists.[6] Such cases as the foregoing are not uncommon, yet descendants of former aristocratic families are today often simple peasants, small merchants, or hotel keepers, utterly without rank or political privilege—indeed, as convinced republicans hostile to anything of the sort; nevertheless, they are fully aware of the achievements of their ancestors and quietly proud of the distinction which their name carries throughout the country. Without manuals similar to Burke or Debrett, any well-informed Swiss can give you a rather impressive list of the historic families in his own and half a dozen neighboring cantons.

---

[4] On death-rates as a basis for the classification of states, cf. A. N. Holcombe, *Foundations of the Modern Commonwealth,* p. 68.

It is, however, not only in families which under monarchic conditions might have attained peerages that knowledge of ancestry is cherished. Owing to the settled nature of the population, peasants of quite undistinguished stocks realize that they are merely the latest of a long stream of generations that have inhabited the same mountain valley, and their womenfolk are experts in the lore of intermarriages and cousinship. Church records and headstones in village graveyards preserve these memories from age to age. To a marked extent, also, long established burgher families in the cities recall the connections of their ancestors with medieval guilds and with the innumerable wars, civil and foreign, of the Old Confederation.

Something of the deep affection of the Swiss for family ties may be ascribed to the strongly individual character of their houses and furniture. Not only is the châlet a typically national product, but, varying in materials and architecture from canton to canton, it reflects the life of these narrower fatherlands as well. Adapted as it is everywhere to the peculiarities of climate and to the needs of local life, it is as comfortable and useful as it is picturesque. To the Swiss, therefore, the home is more than a conventional structure of wood or stone, it is something peculiar to himself and the members of his family as Bündner or Bernese or Valaisans. On the façades of many dwellings, particularly in the Engadine, are blazoned in ancient carvings, their gilt and coloring dim with time, the armorial bearings of the proprietors. And in many cantons the outer walls of houses are adorned with frescoes, often crude but rich in local symbolism, and with the *Wahlsprüche* or favorite maxims of the builder, redolent of the hospitable spirit which reigns within. Surely no country can show a larger proportion of houses which without grandeur, and often, indeed, quite humble, nevertheless possess character. Hence it is that the patriotic longing felt so keenly by the Swiss emigrant is in a peculiar sense *Heimweh.*

---

[5] *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands,* p. 3.

[6] Cf. the brief life of *Oberstkorpskommandant Theophil von Sprecher,* by Eduard Wildbolz, which was published as first of a series of "Schweizerköpfe" by Füssli, Zürich, 1928.

In many cantons a variety of quaint customs embellish the outstanding events of family life—birth and baptism, engagement and marriage, death and burial. Folk stories and superstitions peculiar to the countryside are current which explain these customs. Children are not told that babies are brought by storks, although of recent times that venerable myth has filtered in from Germany. According to tales current in Vaud, the magpie performs this office. In the more mountainous sections babies are found in deep gorges or quarried out of falling masses of rock *(Kindli-oder Tittisteine)*, or drawn from crevasses in glaciers, or brought down by shepherds from the highest Alpine meadows.[7]

Much of the importance attached by the Swiss to home influence is traceable to the writings of Pestalozzi. The great pedagogical reformer may almost be said to have established a cult of mothers, illustrating it at length in his *Leonard and Gertude* and *How Gertude Taught Her Children.* To him the good mother appeared as the arch type and model of the good teacher. In all his writing, contrasts are constantly being drawn between the education which the child receives in the living-room *(Wohnstube)* and that received later in the schoolroom *(Schulstube)*, the latter conceived as carrying forward the fundamental elements of knowledge imparted by the mother. Since Pestalozzi's time Tiedemann, de Preyer, Bernard Perez, and many other pedagogical writers have further emphasized the importance of the earlier education received in the home. In turn, their disciples, the school teachers of Switzerland, have inculcated the doctrine so thoroughly that it has been deeply impressed upon all the more thoughtful elements of the population. One notes in their conversation the frequency of references to the "soul of the child" *(Kinderseele)*, a topic which never seems outworn and which always arouses keen discussion.

---

[7] E. Hoffmann-Krayer, *Feste und Bräuche des Schweizervolkes* (Zürich: Schulthess, 1913), p. 23.

One rarely sees ragged, dirty, or neglected children either on the streets or the rural by-ways of Switzerland. During the summer, to be sure, peasant boys often go barefooted as they did in the United States a generation ago, but the soil must be free from hookworm for they are the most vigorous youngsters imaginable. Complaints are sometimes heard to the effect that children drift during the period between public-school and working age, tending to grow coarse and unruly, particularly if they come into contact with city conditions. To meet this situation, much has been done by excellent continuation and trade schools of every description. Moreover, so decorous is the outward façade of life in larger Swiss centers of population that even the influences of the street seem much less prejudicial to the proper development of childhood than in the metropolitan cities of other countries. As to unruliness, the younger Swiss generation impresses foreign observers as being on the whole under the influence of family discipline to an exceptional degree. Certainly it is not allowed an excess of liberty, and it is not pampered; for example, high-school students do not commonly receive presents of motor cars from their cowed or admiring parents. On the contrary, children of all except the richest families have their allotted share of household duties to perform, especially in the country, of course, but to a considerable degree also in the cities. Juvenile impudence and disorder in public places are unknown; at times, indeed, Swiss youth seems almost too much overburdened with educational preparation for the stern competition of mature life. A fairly convincing piece of evidence showing that the older generation has not lost control is afforded by the existence in many parts of the country of local police regulations forbidding "young persons," i.e., persons *under eighteen years of age!* from attending motion-picture shows.[8]

---

[8] Thus the regulation regarding erection and management of moving-picture theaters in Canton Zürich, passed October 16, 1916, revised June 26, 1922, provides (No. 27): "To general presentations only persons of over eighteen years of age may be admitted. Younger persons up to the completed eighteenth year are permitted to attend special presentations in which only those films may be shown which have been expressly declared permissible for that age." As far as the author's observations went, such regulations were as generally enforced as was humanly possible. Wherever they are in effect, all movie theaters display prominently about their entrances signs stating the legal age at which persons may be admitted.

In Swiss literature not of a pedagogical character, the significance of home life is frequently stressed. Although purely romantic in character, Gottfried Keller's *Frau Regula Amrain und ihr Jüngster* would have delighted the heart of Pestalozzi, presenting, as it does, the work of a mother in forming the character of her son not only in infancy but in childhood, youth, and man's estate, a large part of her effort being directed to make him a good citizen. And in Keller's *Wahltag* it is the old grandfather, charged with the care of three orphan boys, who, with unlimited resourcefulness and determination, finally impresses upon them that the good Swiss citizen must appear regularly at the polls and take an active interest in political affairs. Almost all Swiss novels illustrate this close connection between family interests and civic interests, particularly the innumerable stories dealing with peasant and village life. To cite a recent illustration, *Up from the Soil, Hans Uhli's Development as Farmer and Citizen*,[9] is an utterly naïve idyll of family life, agriculture, and politics, coupled with a persuasive appeal to vote the Independent Democratic ticket as against that of the Peasants' party. While Hans Uhli, the hero, does, in a sense, come up from the soil, being elected first to the town council and later to the cantonal legislature, nevertheless he remains to the end a simple "dirt farmer," working side by side with his laborers in the fields and at home taking counsel with his good wife, Martha, on all affairs of farm, family, and the state.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE

Consideration of voting in Switzerland is incomplete without some reference to that large part of the population which is debarred from suffrage—the "better half" in a very real sense, since women outnumber men by nearly 140,000 in a total of less than 4,000,000. Only in three high mountain cantons—Uri, Obwalden, and Valais—are they in a minority; at the other end of the scale their preponderance runs to 545 per 1,000 in Basel-Stadt and Geneva, both of which are virtually city states.

If industry constitutes a claim to the suffrage, Swiss women have earned it in full. For generations they have been models of household economy, as are those of them today who remain in the home. As in other countries, however, the coming of the machine has detached large masses of women wholly or partly from domestic pursuits. According to the census of 1920, of the 1,852,053 persons gainfully employed in Switzerland, 591,455, or 31.9 per cent, were women, a proportion which has been increasing slowly but steadily of recent decades. Of these, 268,031, or 45.3 per cent, were engaged in manufacturing; 98,675, or 16.7 per cent, in commercial pursuits; and 7,141, or 1.2 per cent, in transportation.[10] The number engaged in professional work and public administration was 31,862, school teachers to the total of 14,975 forming the largest single subdivision under this category, physicians and nurses coming second, with 8,616. In agriculture the number of women was set down as 97,682, nearly one-fifth of the total so occupied; but it is a matter of common knowledge that wives of peasants, and their children of both sexes as well, help them materially in the labors of the field. There are certain cantons, e.g., Ticino and Schaffhausen, from which large masses of men emigrate permanently or seasonally, where women actually carry on the greater part of the work of farming.

---

[9] H. J. Andres, *Von der Scholle aufwärts, Hans Uhlis Werdegang als Bauer und Staatsbürger* (Chur: Bischofberger, 1926).

Nor do Swiss women of the leisure class go in much for the pursuit of pleasure and fashion. Housekeeping of the good old-fashioned sort, with plenty of marketing, washing, scrubbing, mending, and care of children, including husbands—those children of a larger growth—is still held in high esteem among the well-to-do. Like all busy people, these mothers in Israel have always found time to spare for the work of innumerable charitable societies, church societies, societies for town improvement, women's clubs, parents' and teachers' associations, and the like.

During the last two generations the more ambitious younger women of Switzerland have gone in somewhat strenuously for higher educational training, the doors of the University of Geneva being opened to them in 1872, followed by Zürich and Bern a year later, and by three others before the end of 1890. With this vantage point gained, assault was begun upon the learned professions. In social service, volunteer workers had already laid a foundation which has been so extended that three special schools *(soziale Frauenschulen)* now train young women for that type of work—one at Luzern and one at Geneva, both founded in 1918, and the third at Zürich, founded in 1920, the first named being conducted on confessional (Catholic) lines. Long before women were matriculated at the universities the influence of Pestalozzi, always a profound believer in their educational possibilities, had opened up careers for large numbers of them in the schools. With higher training the more capable have developed capacity to fill important administrative posts and even professorial chairs. Swiss women were admitted early to the practice of medicine, in which relatively large numbers of them have found success. Theology proved less tolerant; nevertheless, women preachers have made a place for themselves in reformed church pulpits, and at Geneva there is an Institut des Ministères feminins connected with the university faculty in this subject. With customary conservatism, law also offered sturdy resistance, the admission to practice of a highly qualified woman who had won the distinction of appointment as a university *Dozent* being refused as late as 1887. Since that date several cantons have admitted women to the bar; and when, in 1923, Freiburg still refused to do so, appeal was taken to the Federal Court, which compelled the authorities of that canton to reverse their action, using the following remarkable language in its decision: "Although in Switzerland political rights are still withheld from women, nevertheless custom and law have established the equal position of the sexes in economic life." As implied prophecy, naturally this dictum from the highest court in the land gave profound encouragement to suffrage workers. So far as the reference to economic equality is concerned, clearly it must be interpreted to mean not parity of earnings but rather the right to enter into competition with men. Nevertheless, the latter right is so freely granted women in Switzerland and has been exercised with sufficient success by so many of them that it explains to a considerable degree their comparative lack of interest in the suffrage movement.

---

[10] For a systematic treatment of this subject, see Margarita Gagg, *Die Frau in der schweiz. Industrie* (Zürich: Füssli, 1928).

Meanwhile, the women of Switzerland had organized themselves with a thoroughness which exceeds that of the men, if such a thing be possible. In addition to the older charitable and general welfare associations, women's clubs of the type familiar in the United States proved widely popular; in 1900 the latter formed a federal league (Bund schweizerischer Frauenvereine). Nothing short of a catalogue would do justice to the organizations of women workers in the trades and professions, among the latter the Swiss Association of Women Teachers (Schweizerischer Lehrerinnenverein) being one of the largest and strongest. They are organized as consumers also in the Swiss Women Consumers' Co-operative League (Schweizerischer Konsumgenossenschaftliche Frauenbund). There are clubs of women artists and scientists, and a Swiss analogue of the American Association of University Women bearing the somewhat formidable title: "Schweizerischer Verband der Akademikerinnen. As noted elsewhere, national organizations for the cultivation of gymnastics and music include large numbers of women's sections, which compete vigorously among themselves.[11] In

---

[11] Cf. chap. xiii.

1918 Swiss women interested in mountain-climbing formed the Schweizerischer Frauen-Alpen-Klub. A complete list of associations of all the foregoing kinds is a rather imposing thing. Unfortunately, however, most of the organizations formed by Swiss women are divided into two camps along confessional lines; nevertheless, this does not prevent their co-operation for common ends.

The distinction of making the first public declaration in favor of votes for women (1898) seems to belong to the Union für Frauenbestrebungen of Zürich. Soon there were specific suffrage organizations in seven or eight other large cities, which in 1900 united in the Swiss Association for Woman Suffrage (Schweizerischer Verband für Frauenstimmrecht), to represent them nationally and internationally.[12] The association now (1929) counts thirty-eight sections and local groups which, after the usual Swiss model, possess complete autonomy in cantonal affairs.

In matters of legislation affecting women, particularly the factory act, sickness, accident and old-age insurance, insurance of mothers, white slavery, liquor traffic, the Civil Code of 1912, and the pending Criminal Code, representatives of the foregoing organizations have exercised a notable influence. During the World War alone, they more than justified their existence by the splendid work accomplished not only for Swiss soldiers occupied in guarding the frontiers and their families but also for the interned and repatriates of other countries. Since 1918 this type of activity has been continued in the industrial field.

Beginning with the summer of 1919, thus antedating the Socialists by three years, the Association for Woman Suffrage has conducted annually a vacation school devoted to the interests of the movement, broadly considered. Some ideally located spot is chosen for the purpose; the mornings are devoted to lectures in both German and French on such subjects as jurisprudence, the League of Nations, the woman movement in other countries, the occupational aptitudes of women, the relations of mothers and daughters, gardening for women, and the like; and the afternoons and evenings are given over to hikes, boating, and social events. During the summer of 1927 some fifty students, representing all parts of Switzerland, attended the suffrage vacation course, held that year at Magglingen on the Lake of Biel.

---

[12] Mlle Emilie Gourd, of Geneva, has been president of the Swiss Association for Woman Suffrage since 1914, and is also editor of the *Mouvement féministe,* which serves as its organ in the French-speaking section of the country. In German Switzerland the *Schweizer Frauenblatt,* published at St. Gallen, and *Berna,* published at Bern, are widely read by those interested in the women's movement.

To the period following the war belongs also the founding in eleven larger cities of *Frauenzentrale*, which act as clearing houses for women's clubs and activities of every sort. During the last few years five of these central bodies have conducted successfully a number of mass meetings *(Kantonale Frauentage)*, attended by city and peasant women for the purpose of discussing questions common to both, and thus reaching a better understanding between them. If these cantonal women's diets develop into a permanent institution, they should be of the highest social and political importance, first, by overcoming to a degree the ancient antagonism between urbanites and ruralites; second, perhaps, by inducing peasant women to take an attitude favorable to the suffrage cause.

Although it is not particularly difficult to get, and keep, good servants in Switzerland, the women of that country have not been content merely to talk about the matter. Several of their organizations have co-operated to secure the establishment in ten cities of training schools in housekeeping for young women of good family, the graduates of which are competent to take charge of any ordinary domestic establishment. Every effort is made to raise their employment to the dignity of a skilled trade. Incidentally, they are treated not as menials but as members of the family which engages them, taking their place at table and being introduced to guests.

But the most striking recent achievement of the *Frauenbewegung* in Switzerland was the SAFFA, which abbreviation served mercifully for the Schweizerische Ausstellung für Frauen Arbeit (translated, the Swiss Exposition for Women's Work), which was held in Bern during August and September of 1928 and which brought together in a common undertaking every organization of women in the country without distinction of creed, class, occupation, or political affiliation. Its ten large buildings, designed by a woman architect, housed exhibits presenting all phases of woman's work—in the family, in the school, in social service, in agriculture, in shop or office, and in the professions—all designed not only to show what had been accomplished but also to indicate opportunities for new activities. Women planned and managed the exposition, kept its three large restaurants going in a manner which proved that cookery is not a lost art in Switzerland, wrote the music and designed the pageants which formed its most joyous and colorful feature. SAFFA was an unqualified success from every point of view, attracting hosts of visitors, Swiss and foreign, impressing all of them with the versatility and solidity characteristic of Swiss women's work. Incidentally, it realized a handsome net profit which was divided among the co-operating organizations for use in various forms of social work.

Obviously, suffrage is but one of the many absorbing interests of Swiss womanhood. Nor has the effort to obtain it made much headway to date. As early as 1891 the Free Church of Geneva conferred the right to vote on its women members, followed by Vaud and Neuchâtel in 1896 and 1910, respectively. In the same cantons the established churches enfranchised their women communicants between 1908 and 1916; Bern, Basel-Stadt, Graubünden, Thurgau, and Aargau provide for a sort of local option in the matter, leaving final decision to each ecclesiastical commune. In Bern some eighty of the latter have given the vote to women members since 1917, when the reform became effective in that canton; but after six years in Thurgau and two in Aargau no local church body has conferred suffrage upon them. A measure conferring *kirchliche Stimmrecht* on women, passed by the legislature of Zürich in 1923, was defeated by an overwhelming referendum vote. Considering the hearty support given by Swiss women to every form of religious work, in devotion to which they easily take precedence over men, the latter do not seem to be largely endowed with Christian charity. An explanation, often advanced, of the masculine attitude on the relatively unimportant issue of church suffrage is that, once granted, new demands will promptly follow, one upon another, until the citadel of sex superiority is lost.

Beginning with Basel-Stadt in 1903, eight cantons now permit women to be elected to school boards.[13] "Unfortunately, however," to quote Annie Leuch-Reineck, "the number of seats which, through the magnanimity of the political parties, are left to women is small, so that they can scarcely be said to exercise a direct influence upon the school systems even in these cantons."[14] In five cantons women may also be elected to serve on minor courts for the settlement of industrial difficulties *(Gewerbe Schiedsgerichte)*.[15] Ten cantons permit them to become members of various public commissions of a charitable or sanitary character; and in four cities—La Chaux de Fonds, Luzern, Zug, and Zürich—they may act as moving-picture censors.

Minor political victories, all of the foregoing, and all confined to the field of local government. So far, every effort to obtain cantonal suffrage has failed. Nevertheless, bills conferring it are introduced frequently; and in Neuchâtel, Basel, Zürich, and Geneva they have actually passed the legislature only to be slaughtered by referendum vote—rather striking instances of Swiss popular conservatism as contrasted with the progressiveness of their elected representatives. According to cynics, however, the latter acted merely to do a favor for the ladies who requested it, being perfectly well aware that the great mass of their constituents were impervious to so gentlemanly a consideration. In Neuchâtel the cantonal bill conferring full woman suffrage *(suffrage féminin integral)* of 1919 was defeated on referendum by a popular vote of 12,017 to 5,436; in Urban Basel, 1920, 12,455 to 6,711; in Zürich the same year, 88,695 to 21,631; in Geneva, 1921, 14,169 to 6,634; and again in Urban Basel, 1927, 14,917 to 6,152.

---

[13] The others, with dates, are as follows: Vaud, 1906; Neuchâtel, 1908; Appenzell-Exterior, 1908; Geneva, 1911; Zürich, 1912; Bern and Luzern, 1917.

[14] Cf. her *Die Frauenbewegung in der Schweiz* (Zürich: Füssli, 1928), p. 42, which presents an excellent brief statement of the subject in all its phases.

[15] The five are Zürich, Neuchâtel, Basel-Stadt, Vaud, and St. Gallen.

Unquestionably, therefore, the mass of Swiss voters still accept the great principle, "*Die Frau gehört ins Haus*"—their analogue of our ancient friend, "Woman's place is in the home." Nevertheless, while rank and file stand firm in opposition, men of light and leading belonging to every political camp are coming to recognize the absurdity of oratorical effusions about "the oldest democracy in Europe" when contrasted with the denial of suffrage to considerably more than one-half the adult citizens of the country. The only parties which advocate votes for women are the Socialists and Communists; indeed, their support is said to prejudice large numbers of voters in the older parties against the cause. On the other hand, it is alleged that many "reds" who cheer the official platforms of their parties at public meetings are quite as much determined as any *bourgeois* to preserve male predominance in state and family when it comes to the actual voting on a suffrage measure. In peasant districts sentiment is more than usually strong against woman suffrage, hence the belief that success is likely to come first in such city states as Basel-Stadt and Geneva. The influence of the Catholic hierarchy, which, of course, weighs heavily with the Catholic Conservative party, is also hostile. It may be worth while in this connection to quote a statement issued by the Swiss Catholic Women's League which attracted much attention early in 1929, reading as follows:

> Although political suffrage is not unpermitted even for the Catholic woman, the League neither demands nor furthers it; if, nevertheless, it should find entrance into Switzerland, which our organization would regret, nevertheless the League would urge Catholic women to the loyal and eager fulfilment of their duties.[16]

---

[16] *Berner Bund,* January 18, 1929.

In spite of this somewhat cryptic utterance, or because of it, conservative party members who belong to Protestant churches are afraid that, under woman suffrage, Catholic women would be marshaled to vote solidly at all elections. Further, they fear that the Socialists would usher all their wives and sisters to the polls; while, on the other hand, women of middle-class families would not cast their ballots in large numbers. Upholders of the army system are afraid that there are too many pacifists, and "wets" that there are too many "dries," among their female fellow-citizens, although there is little evidence to sustain either of these apprehensions. Nor are Swiss men much impressed by the fact that Germany and other European states have gone over to suffrage since the war, balancing against them France and Italy which have not done so. In any event, they are quite self-satisfied with what the country has achieved under male, i.e., under their own, rule.

As for the suffragists themselves, the note of passion is conspicuously absent in their utterances. Beyond deprivation of the right to vote they have no large grievances to parade before the world. They cannot complain against the Swiss Civil Code, for example, as French women complain against the Code Napoléon or as English women complained against their common law prior to the reforms inaugurated by the Married Women's Property Act. As has been noted, they are permitted to engage freely in industry and the professions, and are so engaged with such ardor and success that they have little inclination or surplus energy to give the cause. Quite as completely as their men folk, they realize that, even if they were so inclined, the time has gone by, so far as Switzerland is concerned, for any violent political action. And they are not so inclined; there are no wild-eyed suffragettes among them ready to pour acid in mail boxes or storm parliament, and to go on hunger strike when imprisoned for such propagandist methods. On the contrary, their speeches and pamphlets fairly reek with assurances of their peaceful and entirely constitutional frame of mind, also with assertions that they are wholly devoid of sex antagonism. Nor do they seem to have learned the value of sex attraction; perhaps they are too virtuous to use, as American women did, bevies of pretty and charmingly gowned usherettes at campaign meetings designed to advance the cause. Mlle Gourd, their gifted leader, has pointed out that while there have been millions of women workers in family, field, and factory, there have been no great female warriors or stateswomen, no Joan of Arc, no Queen Elizabeth, in Swiss history.[17] There was, indeed, the thirteenth century figure of Gertrud Stauffacher of Schwyz, who is alleged to have exercised political influence in sweet womanly fashion, not directly but by inspiring her husband to join with his friends of Uri and Unterwalden to free themselves from the Austrian yoke. Whether *die Stauffacherin* was legendary or historical, it is hard to say, but certainly she is very much alive in the hearts of her twentieth-century daughters, too much so, one is inclined to think who believes that a woman is a human being and an end in herself.

---

[17] Cf. her admirable essay entitled "Femmes suisses au service de la patrie, jadis, aujourdhui, et demain" in the volume *Cours d'éducation nationale* (Geneva: Eggimann, 1916).

Quite recently Swiss suffrage workers have shown unwonted activity. Emboldened, perhaps, by the brilliant success of SAFFA, they circulated petitions addressed to the federal chambers, to which they succeeded in obtaining in the course of three months the imposing total of 248,297 signatures, of which 77,990 were those of men. Among the signers were citizens of every political party and social class, from all parts of the country—Geneva, Vaud and Neuchâtel, where the movement enjoys unusual favor, especially distinguishing themselves. On June 6, 1929, the petitions were handed over with due ceremony to the presidents of the National Council and the Council of States. Hitherto, Swiss suffragists, with the exception of Socialists, have held aloof, as a rule, from the organization and activities of parties, but they are now beginning to show a desire for participation in practical politics.[18] Another encouraging sign of the times, albeit of small moment, is the recent formation of an anti-suffrage league, the Schweizerische Liga gegen das Frauenstimmrecht. Prior to the latter happening, inquiries as to the existence of "antis" in the country required a translation of that term, being answered with a broad grin and the information that so strong an opposition did not need organization. In spite of recent heartening symptoms, however, the struggle for woman suffrage in Switzerland promises to be a long-drawn-out affair.

---

[18] For a discussion of this point, cf. *Berner Bund,* May 16, 1929. Earlier examples of political co-operation between men and women are afforded by the famous Liberal Club of Thun and by an auxiliary group of Independent Democratic women in St. Gallen.

CHAPTER X

SPECIAL PATRIOTIC AND OTHER SOCIETIES

Preceding chapters must have impressed upon the reader the fact that the people of Switzerland are in the habit of organizing themselves, readily and effectively, for every social purpose under the sun. It is the constant interplay and balance of these innumerable associations, none of them capable of dominating the others, which account in large part for the essentially democratic character of the country's politics. From end to end of the republic there extends a network of thousands upon thousands of *Vereine,* most of them gathered up into cantonal and ultimately into federal unions. In addition to the special purpose pursued by each of these organizations, nearly all of them avow a patriotic purpose as well. The same thing is true to a marked degree of the cults of marksmanship and gymnastics, and also of the singing and musical societies which are to be discussed later.

If, then, one were to undertake a treatise dealing with all Swiss societies possessing some patriotic tinge, a volume of encyclopedic proportions would be required. Of course, most of the organizations falling under this category are concerned with politics to a slight degree only, and present few, if any, features that are not commonplace elsewhere. For these reasons they are omitted from the following sketch. On the other hand, two Swiss organizations, the New Helvetic Society and the Association of Swiss Citizenship Courses, are exclusively political in purpose, novel in method, and of marked importance in the life of the country; hence the large share of attention devoted to them. Boy Scouts are found, and are much the same, the world over; nevertheless, their organization in Switzerland takes on certain peculiar features which are characteristic and unusually interesting. Of course the Free Masons are not primarily patriotic; according to their enemies, indeed, they are precisely the reverse. Nevertheless, they protest against the accusation with true Swiss fervor, and as the only secret society in the country, unquestionably involved to some extent in politics, deserve at least brief consideration.

THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

Patriotic societies in general run to "100 percentism," to emotion rather than to reflection. The peculiar distinction of the New Helvetic

Society is that it has known how to combine a thoroughly national point of view with a thoroughly intellectual method of approach. From the time when the Society was called into existence in its present form on February 1, 1914, to the present day, it has continuously influenced Swiss political thinking to a marked degree. While not directly a movement for popular education in civics as is the Association for Swiss Citizenship Courses, it has so handled a large number of political problems that significant educational results followed. In many respects the New Helvetic Society is an academy or graduate school of politics. It seeks to bring to bear upon political issues the best brains of the country. From their specialized studies a series of valuable papers and monographs have emerged. These are widely discussed in national assemblies and in group meetings of the Society, and echoes of such discussions are repeated in the press and popular gatherings, in party diets and legislative bodies. What the New Helvetic Society thinks is not directly translated into propaganda for the masses, but through the foregoing mediums it filters downward with no small degree of effectiveness. Behind the Society there is a long and honorable tradition, originally somewhat aristocratic in character, although in its present form the organization is certainly not aristocratic in the ordinary political sense of the term. In the platonic sense, that of trained intellects working for the best interests of the state, it is, indeed, aristocratic; but so useful are its activities that it might well serve as model for movements of a similar character in all democratic countries of high culture.

The present or "New" Society is really third in line of descent from the original organization, the Helvetic Society, founded in 1761.[1] At that time Switzerland, torn by feuds between Protestants and Catholics, between the German-speaking and French-speaking sections, between cantons each jealous to the last degree of its separate rights, had reached the lowest ebb of national feeling. Curiously enough there never was a period in the history of the country when it possessed a larger number of scholars, writers, and scientists of European fame, men like the historians Füssli, and Müller, Pastor Johann Kaspar Lavater, the mathematician Bernouilli, the authors Gessner and Urs Balthasar, the critic and translator Bodmer, the educational reformer, Pestalozzi. It was men of this type, reinforced by numerous representatives of patrician families in German Switzerland and to a smaller degree in the Romance section of the country, who came together to form the original Helvetic Society. In a most leisurely eighteenth-century manner they were accustomed to meet annually at Schinznach-Bad, spending their time at this delightful little spa in the reading of long-winded addresses chiefly on the subject of patriotism and on various schemes for social reform with which they intended to bless the masses of their countrymen, but devoting almost as much of their attention to the cultivation of friendship and the muses as to the more idealistic aspects of politics. Among other projects they discussed that of a school for future statesmen proposed by Bodmer and Balthasar, which, unlike most of their plans, was actually put into practice by two really enterprising members from Graubünden, Planta and Salis. A political realist of twentieth-century type is inclined to smile over the old Helvetic Society as a charming but somewhat ineffective union of enthusiasts and noble souls who promptly gave up the ghost when the troops of the French Directory burst into the country in 1798. From an ideal point of view, however, the Society accomplished two great ends which deserve the everlasting gratitude of the Swiss people. In a day of jealous, squabbling sectionalism and sectarianism the Helvetic fathers were truly national in spirit. As Dr. Hans Nabholz puts it,

---

[1] For an admirable account of the first two Helvetic societies, the reader should consult Hans Nabholz, *Die Helvetische Gesellschaft,* 1761–1848 (Zürich: Füssli, 1926; 35 pages).

> This new patriotic feeling, disregarding narrow cantonal boundaries and including the whole fatherland, which was called to life and sedulously guarded by the Helvetic Society, created in the Swiss people the spiritual basis upon which only the great work of the nineteenth century, the federal state of the year 1848, could be erected.

Second, and an even greater achievement from the universal viewpoint, the Helvetic Society taught the duty of men of light and leading to unite in thought and labor for the furtherance of the welfare of their fellow-men.[2]

With the return of order following the Act of Mediation, the second Helvetic Society was called into existence at a meeting held in Zofingen in 1807. Few of the members of the original Society were active in the new body, and control soon passed to vigorous younger men of liberal views. Plunging into the practical party struggles of their time, they devoted themselves to such issues as freedom of the press, popular sovereignty, opposition to clericalism, and the transformation of the weak Pact of 1815 into a strong federal union. Naturally, the second Hel-

[2] G. Guggenbühl, *Vom Geist der Helvetik* (Zürich: Füssli, 1925; 29 pages), defends the older Society against historians who are inclined to laugh at it as ineffectual.

vetic Society soon lost its conservative following, but, on the other hand, it contributed materially to the great reforms of 1830 and finally to the establishment of the constitution of 1848. With all its main objectives attained in the latter document, the organization passed out of existence. Great as were the tactical differences between the first and second Helvetic societies they had one fundamental point in common, namely, whole-hearted devotion to a patriotism which disregarded cantonal and language boundaries—in other words, a patriotism as broad as the boundaries of the country itself.

Not until our own day did conditions in Switzerland again become so threatening that men were compelled to organize for a third time in defense of national interests. With the outbreak of the World War a terrifying gulf seemed to open suddenly between German-speaking and Romance-speaking sections of the country. It is obvious enough now that lack of knowledge and misunderstanding had been increasing for several years before; also that, had the situation been taken by the forelock, much might have been done to prevent so menacing a state of affairs. To make the crisis more threatening, Switzerland was deluged by propaganda coming from both of the warring camps.[3] Possibly the danger was exaggerated: the Swiss are cautious to an extreme degree and give the impression to observers from larger states that they overestimate every political threat whether of external or internal origin; nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the country feared break-up and measureless catastrophe.

Once confronted by an emergency apparently so grave, action was prompt enough, however; and it was the tradition of the old Helvetic societies which pointed the way to *rapprochement* between the two estranged sections. Under the circumstances, it was fortunate, indeed, that delegates from all parts of the country had been summoned to meet in Bern early in 1914. Many of them were young men who met almost as strangers, all of them were gravely perturbed by conditions at home and by the general European situation; but as a result of their quiet discussions with each other, it became apparent that the issues which seemed to separate them were misunderstandings of small account as compared with the vital importance of a united national sentiment. Naturally, a strenuous effort was made at the meeting in Bern to thrust to one side every possible bone of contention, to stress to the utmost those things all Swiss citizens had in common regardless of language and local differences. Out of that assemblage the present, or

---

[3] Cf. Will Irwin, *A Reporter at Armageddon* (New York, 1918), especially chap. xi, "Switzerland the Uneasy."

New, Helvetic Society emerged, which, when the storm of war broke, devoted every ounce of its strength to the work of national unification. It was not, of course, the only influence bent to that end. The better newspapers and the more far-sighted statesmen, ably aided by men of light and leading all over the country, threw themselves into the work of internal reconciliation. As an organization devoted wholly to the restoration of national unity, however, the New Helvetic Society contributed mightily to the cause, serving as center and focus for every unifying impulse. For example, it was before a group of the new organization meeting in Zürich, December 14, 1914, that the poet Carl Spitteler delivered his immortal speech on "Our Swiss Standpoint,"[4] which, more than any utterance, official or unofficial, crystallized the thought of the country on the war. Since 1918 the Society has made of itself a national forum for the discussion of all the major political questions of the day.

It is the purpose of the New Helvetic Society to strengthen the idea of the fatherland. Under its device "*Pro Helvetica dignitate ac securitate*," it seeks, above everything, to promote national sentiment, national education, national interest; its end is to create a national awakening, a renewal of Swiss loyalty. It endeavors to further the general welfare of the country but is convinced that the public conscience must be aroused for a struggle against encroaching materialism. To achieve the foregoing ends, the members endeavor first to instruct each other by the threshing-out in their own midst of questions on which they hold divergent opinions, the conclusions which they reach being made available later for the information of the general public. The New Helvetic Society disclaims any intention to become a political party; it endeavors to stand outside of and above all parties. Naturally the latter attitude is often decidedly hard to maintain; for example, there have been sharp interchanges of opinion among members recently regarding the position to be taken toward certain Socialist leaders and their policies.[5] Owing to the distinctly patriotic character of the Society, it counts few representatives of the latter party among its membership. On the other hand, certain of its own leaders are somewhat disgruntled because it does not take a more hostile attitude toward the Social Democracy.

At present the New Helvetic Society has nineteen inland groups:

---

[4] *Unser Schweizer Standpunkt* (Zürich: Verlag Rascher u. Cie, 1918); see, also, the somewhat detailed reference to this address, chap. xi below.

[5] For discussions on these points, see the *Bulletins* of the New Helvetic Society for March–April, p. 46, and for May–June, p. 92, both of the year 1927.

thirteen in German and five in French Switzerland, and one in the canton of Graubünden. In the east the groups of St. Gallen and Zürich are particularly strong; in the west, those of Geneva and Lausanne. All together, the society has some 2,500 members, among them many high federal officials. Every year it arranges for three or four national assemblies at which the local groups are represented by delegates. By varying the places at which these gatherings are held, the Society meets the convenience of its members and brings influence to bear now in one, now in another, section of the country. Some idea of the scope of its interests may be gained from the following list of the more important topics upon its agenda during the years 1927–29: the initiative against acceptance by Swiss citizens of foreign orders and decorations, problems of Swiss agriculture, relations of Switzerland with Soviet-Russia, dangers involved in the present-day conflict of economic interests in politics, the question of the zones and of Savoy, the initiative permitting re-establishment of gambling in casinos, the alcohol question and its solution, acceptance of revised Article 44 of the federal constitution concerning measures to be taken against too large a foreign population in Switzerland, problems presented by the growth of administrative personnel, exportation of electrical power generated in Switzerland, woman suffrage, local option, civilian service, democracy and authority, influences harmful to clean public life and therefore belonging within the limits of a sane criticism of democracy.

As a rule, questions such as the foregoing are discussed first in the meetings of local groups, the findings of the latter, often accompanied by large collections of data, being reported upon at the national delegate assemblies. Debates in the latter are of a high order of merit, bringing to bear upon all questions considered the opinions of careful students from every part of Switzerland. They are reported at considerable length in the *Bulletin* of the Society, a valuable bi-monthly magazine of 60 to 80 pages which, in addition, reviews all current literature on political topics and serves as a clearing house for the activities of local groups. More recently the Society has undertaken the publication of a national yearbook, the first issue of which has just made its appearance under the title: *Die Schweiz, 1930.* Closely packed within its 305 pages are articles by distinguished authorities dealing with many phases of the political, economic, and cultural life of the country. The new yearbook promises to become a worthy successor to those issued years ago by Hilty, Zurlinden, and the *Schweizer Presse.* As a reference work it is indispensable for scholars at home and abroad, particularly for those interested in Swiss civic training.

It is the custom of the New Helvetic Society to appoint committees of experts for the study of continuing political questions. From the labors of these committees a very large pamphlet literature has developed which no one interested in the public life of Switzerland since the outbreak of the World War can afford to neglect. So far as possible, the decisions of the Society are formulated in resolutions carried at the national delegate assemblies, which, under certain circumstances, are subject to referendum vote by members of the locals throughout the country. Judging from the amount of space given to these resolutions in the press of the country, a considerable section of the public —and that the most intelligent—is deeply interested in the work of the organization. Occasionally, also, a group meeting at which some leader of prominence discusses a vital question is thrown open to the public and receives wide notice.

Critics of the New Helvetic Society are inclined to consider it somewhat too academic, too cautious, and too little inclined to take a bold stand, although it could hardly be otherwise and hold its following in all sections of the country. They assert, further, that it is essentially conservative, not radical, as were its two predecessors; and that it no longer performs so vital a function as during the earlier "heroic" years of its existence. As to the high value of its contribution toward the unification of the country during the World War, there can be little difference of opinion. Nowadays, however, partisans who dislike the attitude of the New Helvetic Society on any pending question are naturally not hesitant about expressing their opposition. Looking at it as a continuous forum for the discussion of great issues by many of the ablest men of the country, nevertheless, the Society performs a function of obvious value which elsewhere is left too largely to the inexpert and self-seeking manipulation of political conventions, partisan newspapers, lobbyists of special interests, and members of legislatures.

While the function of the New Helvetic Society as a super-parliament of Swiss public opinion is its most notable contribution, it has shown a distinctly practical touch on various occasions. Thus, with the purpose of improving industrial and commercial conditions during the World War, it gave the first impulse to the formation of the Schweizerwoche-Verband, which is still actively at work, as the press reports of the Swiss Week (it really lasted two) of November 19 to December 2, 1929, sufficiently attest. Through the efforts of this association domestic products displayed at the large-scale expositions *(Mustermessen)* held in central cities are also presented virtually throughout the country, thus contributing "to a better mutual understanding by all Swiss economic circles and population groups and to a deeper conception of the needs of the national economy among the people as a whole." The methods employed are simple and inexpensive. With the co-operation of merchants and consumers' co-operatives show windows everywhere blossom out into small but impressive expositions of domestic goods and models during the two weeks set apart for the purpose. Concurrently meetings are held, sometimes on a national scale and attended by leading statesmen and business men of the republic, at which the merits and needs of Swiss producers, consumers, and workingmen are discussed. Not least in effectiveness, perhaps, are the prizes offered school children for essay competitions regarding the more extended use of various domestic products.

During the war, also, the New Helvetic Society went to work upon public opinion in an extremely direct and intelligent way. Owing to their relative poverty, many Swiss papers had been accustomed for years prior to 1914 to purchase from large printing establishments special Sunday magazine sections *(Beilagen)* for distribution among their own readers. Because of mass production and consequent low costs, most of this business had been captured by German firms. They supplied popular literary wares, harmless enough in the main no doubt, but still sufficiently sprinkled with pictures and news of high, higher, and all-highest princely personages of Hohenzollern and other family connections as to disturb certain of the more ardent Swiss democrats. With the outbreak of war, of course, these *Beilagen* offered access for pro-German propaganda to virtually every family in the country. To meet this dangerous situation, the New Helvetic Society promptly founded an association for the publication of Sunday supplements according to its own ideas, filling them with good sound articles, with simple poems, and with illustrations drawn from domestic life, all of genuinely Swiss and neutral character and pervaded by a purely democratic atmosphere. Newspapers throughout the country were invited to substitute these homemade *Beilagen* for the German variety, and easy financial arrangements were offered enabling them to do so. It was a costly undertaking as the Swiss measure such matters, a deficit of 68,000 francs being incurred; but at the peak of its work the association succeeded in circulating some 300,000 supplements weekly, which played no small part in causing a shift of sentiment favorable to a purely national point of view.

To no subject, however, has the New Helvetic Society given a larger share of attention or made a more practical contribution than to that of emigration. It was taken up, first as a special topic by the group of

Schaffhausen, the principal fruit of its labors being an excellent and thoroughly documented pamphlet by Ernst Müller on *Unsere Auslandschweizer ("Our Swiss Abroad").*[6] Not content with a purely scientific treatment of the problem, the Society founded in 1915 a special secretariat with offices in Freiburg, recently transferred to Bern, which, under the efficient management of Dr. Ed. Zellweger, has accomplished an enormous amount of practical work. Since 1920 it has also issued an attractive illustrated monthly magazine, the *Schweizer Echo,* now under the editorial direction of Dr. A. Lätt, of Zürich, which is widely read by Swiss in other countries. Finally, the Society published in 1927, *Deine Heimat, Das Auslandschweizer Buch,* by J. Weber, of Basel,[7] which may best be described as a textbook for the cultivation of national spirit among the Swiss living abroad. It is most admirably done, presenting in simple language brief accounts of the history, geography, literature, the social and economic conditions, the art and culture of the country—the whole richly illustrated in photogravure and color, and supplied with excellent maps. The importance attached to Weber's book is shown by the fact that a Preface was contributed to it by Federal-President Motta. It was published simultaneously in the three national languages and is distributed at half-price (Fr. 3) to Swiss living in foreign countries and to members of the New Helvetic Society.

Switzerland has had hundreds of years of experience with the problem of emigration. A mountain country with high birth-rate and hard living conditions surrounded by rich lowland neighbors, its sons left by thousands during the Middle Ages almost exclusively with the purpose of becoming mercenary soldiers in the armies of foreign princes. Economic emigration of the modern type began as early as the sixteenth century, reaching its largest volume, of course, during the nineteenth century. At first it was regarded as necessary and desirable because of the poverty of the country. Cantonal and communal governments assisted it officially, sometimes supplying considerable financial aid to emigrants, particularly after crop failures or catastrophes. Some of the local authorities, intent upon lowering the poor rates, shipped out masses of their homeless and destitute people—old soldiers, the lame, the halt and the blind, idiots and feeble-minded, criminals fresh from prison—most of whom perished miserably in tropical South America. It is a shameful page in Swiss history this "sale of souls" *(Seelenverkäuferei)* as it is now called, although of course the annals of emigration in other lands are not without blots of equal blackness. Agents of colonial enterprises, of transportation companies, and even of foreign states were encouraged in their work of depleting the population. It will surprise many Americans, no doubt, to learn that in the eighties of the last century the state of Wisconsin maintained an office in Basel which distributed propagandist literature in favor of emigration throughout Switzerland.

---

[6] Zürich: Rascher u. Cie, 1919; 87 pages.

[7] Geneva: Sadag, A.G.; 224 pages.

Since that time an almost complete reversal of public opinion on the subject has taken place. It could hardly be otherwise, considering that during recent decades the number of immigrants has largely exceeded that of emigrants. During the first decade of the present century, 54,000 Swiss left the country while 134,000 foreigners entered it. In 1910 the number of foreigners resident in Switzerland was 552,011 out of a total population of 3,753,293, the percentage of the former (14.7) being almost exactly the same as the corresponding figure for the United States at the same time. Ten years later, as a result of the World War and the restrictions upon immigration following it, the situation had changed materially as regards resident foreign population, which had fallen to 402,385, or only 10.4 per cent of the total. Nevertheless, thoughtful Swiss citizens could not fail to look forward with dread to the return of old conditions, a large loss of their own flesh and blood on the one hand, and the submergence of the remaining native population by floods of foreigners on the other. Since 1920 their apprehensions have been more than justified by a flow of emigration to countries overseas at a more rapid rate than in the decade 1900–1910, although during the last three years for which figures are available (1924–26, inclusive) a decline in the movement has been recorded.[8]

With an average of two or more foreigners taking the place of every citizen who has left the country during a long series of years, it is not strange that discussion of immigration and emigration problems has attracted much earnest attention in Switzerland. Methods of dealing with immigration are discussed elsewhere;[9] suffice it to say here that the outward and inward movements of population take place at different economic and educational levels. Thus the Swiss machine-building industry has difficulty in finding mechanics and foremen but is always plentifully supplied with native engineers trained in the best schools of the country.[10] Certain poorly paid, and therefore neglected, occupations have fallen largely into the hands of the foreign workers. From 70 to 80 per cent of the shoemakers and shoe-repairers in Switzerland, and from 80 to 95 per cent of laborers in the building trades, are immigrants. On the other hand, Swiss who are forced out are often highly skilled workers or men and women who have been educated in the best schools of the country. Peasant farmers, shepherds, dairy-workers, and vineyardists who are compelled to abandon their too narrow acres in the mountain valleys of the homeland are well trained and often well schooled, and usually succeed admirably abroad. There are said to be more qualified voters of Verzasca now residing and working in California than are left in the little Ticinese valley from which they came. Agricultural laborers and workers in extractive industries make up nearly 30 per cent of Swiss emigrants; artisans, many of whom are expert workers in metal and textiles, an equally large proportion.[11] A sixth of the emigrants are commercial and transportation employees; students and persons living on private incomes, an eighth; administrative officials, lawyers, scientists, and artists, a sixteenth. The remainder (6.75 per cent) go into personal service abroad, many of them, as is well known, seeking to perfect themselves in foreign languages and customs with the intention of returning to Switzerland and entering the hotel industry.[12]

---

[8] *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1926,* p. 108. Exact statistics gathered by the Military Department regarding men of military age show that in 1926 there were 8,733 emigrants and 5,430 returns—a net loss of 3,303. In 1927, as a result of less favorable economic conditions abroad, particularly in France, and more favorable economic conditions at home, the tide turned, there being 7,888 emigrants and 8,296 returns—a net gain of 408.

[9] See chap. xvi.

One phase of the emigration question frequently discussed by Swiss writers is how to retain as large a part of the population as possible within the country. Nothing can be done by ordinary legislative prohibitions or by tax measures, even if action of either sort were desirable, since the federal constitution guarantees the freedom of the citizen *(Freizügikeit)* in this respect.[13] On the other hand, much might be accomplished to make continued residence at home more attractive, as, for example, by improving wage and working conditions, provision of small homesteads with gardens, internal improvements and development of internal colonization, better industrial, trade, and agricultural schooling, and finally, by combating the efforts of foreign agencies to enlist Swiss laborers and employees.

---

[10] Edward Fueter, *Die Schweiz seit 1848* (Zürich: Füssli, 1928), p. 230.

[11] See figures and table covering the years 1910–16, given on page 21 by Ernst Müller, *op. cit.*

[12] John Addington Symonds, in his admirable story, "Melchior Ragetli," which is included in *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands,* describes a typical career of this sort, leading through service in foreign countries to hotel work in Switzerland.

[13] It does, however, provide for the regulation of the business of emigrant agencies by federal legislation (Art. 34, abs. 2). Under this provision of the constitution acts have been passed, the latest dating from March 22, 1888, by which an emigrant office was established in the political department of the Federal Council. No propaganda in favor of emigration is now permitted in Switzerland.

It is freely admitted, however, that residence of many citizens abroad is a necessity imposed by the economic condition of the country. Without such representatives—merchants, manufacturers, engineers, and technical experts—in all parts of the world, Swiss industry would fail to obtain raw materials at favorable prices, and in consequence would lose many of its best customers. Under such circumstances diminishing prosperity would drive whole masses of people out of the country. In international commerce and transportation it is also obviously to the interest of Switzerland that many of its citizens should reside and do pioneer work for it abroad. Moreover, every immigrant, no matter where he settles, becomes a constant consumer of homemade commodities, the merits of which he advertises effectively among his new neighbors. Some debits as well as credits have to be set down to the account of emigration on the economic ledger. In the cheese, textile, and watchmaking industries Swiss laborers and technical experts resident abroad have developed a formidable competition with domestic products. Losses on the latter score are small, however, in comparison with the large gains derived from the activities of the great mass of Swiss settlers in other countries.

Political as well as economic advantages follow from the residence of considerable numbers of Swiss in foreign lands. Each of them feels himself in some sense an ambassador of his native country; collectively they always enhance its good repute by their industry, capacity, and high sense of honor. Often in time of stress the Swiss at home have had reason to be deeply grateful for the good offices of their brothers in foreign lands; never more so, indeed, than during the World War, when the food and raw materials upon which the life and industry of the country depended absolutely were obtained in large part through the representations of residents in one or the other of the warring camps. Also, whenever there is need in Switzerland, its sons and daughters living overseas respond generously to calls for relief in the form either of money or services. An amazing and touching testimony of this devotion occurred at the outbreak of the World War, when 25,000 men capable of bearing arms, many of whom were born abroad and had never seen the land of their fathers, returned to defend it against possible invasion.[14]

---

[14] Evidently, deplorable errors were committed in dealing with men returning for military service who left their homes, risked irreparable business losses, paid their own traveling expenses, and faced innumerable perils by land and sea. On this matter, see Ernst Müller, *op. cit.,* p. 45.

Conscious of their indebtedness to nationals resident in foreign countries, the Swiss at home have manifested a new interest and affection toward the "*Auslandschweizer*" since the war. In this movement the work undertaken by the New Helvetic Society, briefly referred to above, has been of major importance. The Society has led the way by contributing to the scientific knowledge of the subject, by opening it up to wide public discussion, by the suggestion of improvements in the consular and diplomatic service of the country, and finally by the establishment of its own world-wide organization directed by the Ausland-Schweizer Kommission. Under the auspices of the central office of the latter in Bern, 163 groups of Swiss residents abroad have been established in all parts of the world. In addition the Commission has twenty-three correspondents at other centers of emigrant population who will doubtless succeed in forming groups at the earliest opportunity. Of course, Swiss residents abroad have always united in charitable organizations for the relief of fellow-nationals in distress, also in singing, athletic, and shooting societies, and through the latter particularly they have kept up some measure of contact with the homeland. The significance of the groups recently formed under the auspices of the New Helvetic Society, however, is that they are designed primarily for the purpose of maintaining the closest possible political intercourse with Switzerland.

It is estimated that the total number of Swiss resident abroad is somewhat in excess of 300,000, of whom 160,000 are in European countries, and 134,000 in the Americas.[15] There are "colonies" (for the Swiss use this word in their own particular sense) in many cities of Germany, France, and Northern Italy; and in both North and South American countries; somewhat less often they are found in the Balkans and the Near East, in Africa, Asia, further India and Australia. To establish regular connections with all of them, as the Ausland-Schweizer Kommission attempts to do, involves an enormous amount of correspondence, all of which is handled from the central office in Bern. To every eleven Swiss at home their is one abroad, and it is the avowed purpose of the Commission to reach this twelfth man, wherever he may be, to aid him with word and deed, to maintain in him a sense of connection with the homeland. To this end the widest possible distribution of the monthly magazine, *Schweizer Echo*, and of the recently issued *Auslandschweizerbuch* is being promoted. In addition the Commission sends out at the lowest possible prices or gratis large masses of books and pamphlets, particularly texts on Swiss geography, history, and government, and Pestalozzi calendars designed for the use of the schools. More recently it has arranged meetings of groups in cities of nearby countries at which motion pictures of the *Fête des Vignerons* and plays written by Swiss authors have been presented with great success. Lectures and singing societies sent out by the Commission have also been received with enthusiasm by Swiss colonies in Germany, France, and Italy. During the spring of 1929, Felix Moeschlin, one of the most distinguished literary lights of the country, was designated by the New Helvetic Society to act as "intellectual ambassador" to the United States, delivering scholarly addresses to highly appreciative audiences in several of our larger cities.

---

[15] According to the census of 1920, the number of persons of Swiss birth resident in the United States was 118,659 (*Abstract of the Fourteenth Census*, p. 299).

There is nothing of a chauvinistic character in the literature distributed under the auspices of the New Helvetic Society, nor anything designed in the slightest degree to affect the political attitude of the Swiss abroad toward the country in which he is settled or its neighbors. In both respects the activities of the Society differ sharply from those of the French and Spanish propagandist organizations operating in South American countries.[16] Through their own experience with the Italian nationalistic society, Dante Alighieri, and the German society of similar character, the General German School Union for the Maintenance of the German Spirit in Foreign Lands (Allgemeiner Deutscher Schulverein zur Erhaltung des Deutschtums im Auslande), the Swiss are abundantly familiar with the methods of super patriotic organizations, but they show no inclination to imitate them on their own account. On the contrary, the whole tone of the literature distributed abroad by the New Helvetic Society is summed up in the first paragraph of Herr Weber's *Auslandschweizerbuch* as follows:

> What is the purpose of this book? To implant a love of the homeland, a love based on knowledge of the homeland, on joy in the homeland, a love deep-rooted in an appreciation of the beauties of our fatherland and in an understanding of the historical development of our honored federal state; to awake a consciousness of the homeland, perhaps even some slight pride of citizenship. All these virtues must rest upon an understanding of and appreciation for our political institutions, our democratic constitution and our, in many respects, model legislation. True love of fatherland has nothing to do with chauvinism (*i.e.*, nationalist boasting, incitement to war); it develops modesty and respect for neighbor states, demands the correct relationship of our small, steadfast, self-defending people in the great family of

---

[16] Cf. Clarence H. Haring, *South America Looks at the United States* (New York, 1928), especially chap. vii on "Propaganda and Latin-American Rapprochement," and chap. viii on "Pan-Hispanism and Pan-Latinism."

humanity; in short, as our poet and countryman of Zürich, Gottfried Keller, so unsurpassably put it:

"Respect every man's fatherland but love your own."[17]

A considerable percentage of Swiss emigrants return sooner or later to reside permanently in the land of their birth. Apparently no adequate statistical materials, except as regards men of military age, have been gathered on this point; but it is well known that many of those who leave the country (e.g., as seasonal workers, servants, students, clerks, hotel employees, and others who wish to learn languages or to perfect themselves in their trades) expect to remain abroad for short periods only. Even those who emigrate with the intention of settling down and earning a living are strongly inclined to come back, particularly if they have been successful in acquiring a little property, to spend the evening of their days in the homeland. On the basis of figures collected by overseas countries, it is estimated that about one-fourth of the emigrants to such countries return to Switzerland. One of the tasks to which the new Helvetic Society has addressed itself is the facilitation of the homeward movement of Swiss who have grown tired of residence abroad. It is obvious that the ease of reintegrating them as citizens depends largely upon the extent to which they have maintained touch with the native country. On the latter score complaints are sometimes heard in Switzerland that remind one strongly of the fear of foreign influence expressed by Plato in the *Republic*. The Swiss recognize, somewhat grudgingly perhaps, that knowledge of the customs of other countries brought back by returned emigrants is often of great value, but they criticize sharply those repatriates who take no interest in domestic politics or, worse still, who remain foreign in sympathy and contribute to the already great strength of foreign influence in the country. Such cases are exceptional, but they increase materially the desire to maintain a national spirit among Swiss living abroad.

One of the most interesting proposals made by those interested in the emigration situation is that some measure of political power or representation should be conferred upon Swiss citizens resident abroad. As noted above, the number of the latter is estimated at more than 300,000, a figure which is exceeded by the population of three cantons only. Indeed, it is not unusual to hear the Swiss abroad referred to as "the twenty-third state." The argument runs so:

> In the long run the fatherland cannot continue to impose political duties (*e.g.*, military service or the payment of the military exemption tax) upon

---

[17] *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

> citizens resident in foreign countries: consistency requires that it confer upon them corresponding political rights. Give the Swiss abroad representation in the Federal Assembly, permit them to cast their ballots in initiative and referendum votes, and they will not only perform their political duties more willingly, they will also keep up the liveliest interest in the political life of the fatherland.

Representation of French colonies in the Senate and Chamber at Paris is often cited in support of the foregoing proposal, although, of course, the situation is different in that these colonies are under French sovereignty whereas Swiss "colonies" are merely groups of citizens living under foreign flags.

So far, the argument in favor of conferring votes upon Swiss residents abroad has not passed beyond the purely academic stage. Technically the plan presents no insuperable obstacles in these days of rapid communication and voting by mail, although, of course, it would involve a large burden of work and heavy costs on the consular service. Just how foreign countries would feel about elections held on their soil for membership in the Swiss federal legislature or for the settlement of Swiss referendum issues does not seem to have been considered. Moreover, it is altogether likely that the Swiss at home, who are by no means free from clannishness, might fear the intrusion of foreign votes and representation in the settlement of their domestic problems.

It is impossible not to feel a large measure of admiration for the well-planned and enthusiastic work which the New Helvetic Society has undertaken on behalf of the *Auslandschweizer*. In its favor is the extraordinarily strong love for the homeland which is felt by virtually all Swiss emigrants. The unusually high degree of education which they receive before their departure also helps to preserve in them a national patriotism that ends only with life itself. In the case of colonies located in foreign countries of a lower civilization the latter sentiment may be transmitted indefinitely. In countries of an equal cultural level, however, it is likely to grow weak in the second, and to disappear in the third generation. But even if the struggle of the New Helvetic Society is foredoomed to ultimate defeat in such countries, it is a struggle that may well be kept up so long as the outward flow of population continues, or so long as any considerable number of Swiss born in Switzerland remain in residence abroad. It will make them all the better citizens of their adoptive countries. In the words of Dr. Lätt:

> Precisely those among the Swiss abroad deserve the greatest credit who have worked themselves up highest in the esteem and confidence of their foreign environment; it is ever the best among them who remain true to

themselves. Nor is it necessary for them either to flatter foreigners or to deny the homeland. They show how one may be both a Swiss and a world-citizen. The one is the fulfilment of the other.[18]

No one, for example, who has studied the influence of the Swiss in the United States can doubt its mutually helpful character, particularly in political relations. Moreover, the large proportion of Swiss emigrants who, soon or late, return to the homeland justifies in a peculiar degree the efforts made by the New Helvetic Society to keep alive their interest in the affairs of their native country. Under any conceivable circumstances, Switzerland must, in its own interest, be reconciled to the residence abroad of a considerable percentage of its nationals; nor can it reasonably object to repayment in kind by permitting the entry of foreigners. At present, however, the number of its emigrants is excessive and of its immigrants dangerously large, and a reduction of both is desirable. Measures of economic readjustment, the practice of birth-control, and possibly a quota system similar to that of the United States should suffice to bring about the necessary changes. Meanwhile, there is every reason to continue the work of "building spiritual bridges upon which the Swiss at home may meet with those from foreign lands in order that by the exchange of fruitful ideas they may shape and watch over the future of the nation."[19]

PRO JUVENTUTE

Admirably supplementing the work of the New Helvetic Society in the foreign field, another organization well known to the Swiss under the Latin title, Pro Juventute, has devoted itself, among other things, to the care of the children of citizens resident abroad. Many of the latter have found themselves in reduced circumstances, especially since the World War. To the extent of its means, Pro Juventute has undertaken to provide summer vacations in Switzerland for their children. In the decade ending 1928 more than 19,000 boys and girls have been entertained in the homeland at a total cost of 2,000,000 francs. At the beginning of this work the larger part of the children were taken care of without charge by charitable families, but with increasing numbers of recent years it has become necessary to place half of them in institutions. In selecting applicants, preference is given to the weak or sickly, particularly such as are threatened with tuberculosis, who may be expected to profit most by good food, homelike care, and mountain air. Besides the physical benefits conferred by it, the work undertaken by Pro Juventute in this field has the advantage of enabling children of poorer Swiss families resident abroad to learn something at first hand of the life and thought of the country from which their parents came.

---

[18] See the two capital articles on this subject contributed by Dr. Lätt to *Das Auslandschweizerbuch,* pp. 191–99.

[19] Ernst Müller, *op. cit.,* p. 83.

By far the greater part of the work of Pro Juventute, however, is done for Swiss youth living at home. Founded in 1911, the society announced its prime purpose to be "the awakening and strengthening of the sentiment of their responsibility toward youth among parents, educators, public officials, and the population as a whole." "Youth, moreover," it added, "should be instructed regarding its duties toward itself and toward others."[20] With these ends in view, Pro Juventute has provided a central clearing house and source of financial support for the more than 3,000 scattered organizations of every linguistic, confessional, political, and economic coloring which deal with child welfare in Switzerland. It has contributed generously toward the protection of nursing mothers and infants; the care of children prior to, during, and following school age; the fight against tuberculosis and alcoholism; the special treatment of abnormal children; and many other good causes of similar character.

Second in interest only to the preceding activities are the methods by which Pro Juventute raises funds. Each year the society commissions an eminent artist to design a series of postage stamps in all ordinary denominations, which are then sold for its benefit at a slight advance in price during the holiday season both through private agencies and over the counters of every post-office in the country. Between 1912 and 1928 the annual income thus realized rose from an eighth to more than half a million francs—the latter amount, relative to population, being equivalent to a collection of three million dollars in the United States.

Besides bringing in money, the postage stamps serve to advertise Pro Juventute all the more effectively because of their high artistic merit. In addition the society sells illustrated cards and decorative forms for telegrams of congratulation and condolence; it earns a considerable income from four journals of childhood published in the three languages of the country, and is the recipient both of numerous private gifts and of modest subventions from the federal government.

While it is no doubt true that the remarkable financial success of

---

[20] See the pamphlet *Dix-sept années* Pro Juventute, *Aperçu de l'activité de la fondation dès son début (1912–1929)*, by Otto Binder, published by the general secretariat of the society in Zürich, 1929.

Pro Juventute is largely attributable in the first instance to governmental favor, that, after all, is only part of the story. Governmental favor would not have been forthcoming had there not been widespread popular approval of the work of the society, nor without such approval could relatively so large an income have been secured. In the last analysis, therefore, the success of Pro Juventute is to be credited to the unusually warm affection for, and the profound interest in, children which is so characteristic a trait of the Swiss people as a whole.

ASSOCIATION OF SWISS CITIZENSHIP COURSES (VEREIN DER SCHWEIZERISCHEN STAATSBÜRGERKURSE)

From the last quarter of the eighteenth century to the present time men of light and leading in Switzerland have been anxiously concerned over the education of the younger generation for the duties of citizenship. Perhaps, indeed, with that caution which is so distinctive a national trait, they have been too greatly concerned, too much inclined to bewail the political indifference of youth, its absorption in sport or social pleasures; too ready to glorify the days of yore when, as under the Old Confederation, it was the custom to assemble the youth of certain cantons every ten years to read them the constitutions and treaties by which they were bound and which they swore to respect and keep always; or when, to go still farther back in Swiss history, it was the custom for boys of fourteen, nourished on a diet of sagas and warlike tradition, to take their places in the ranks armed with pike and battle-ax. At every extension of democracy during the nineteenth century, as we have already noted, new demands were made upon the school system to prepare future citizens for the heavier civic duties awaiting them. But in spite of all that the schools have been able to accomplish toward that end, the results have so far failed to satisfy patriotic critics. Nor are the latter any better pleased with the efforts of the family, the press, or the political party to educate for citizenship. In an eloquent address delivered more than a decade ago, the late Robert Forrer, then a member of the National Council from St. Gallen, summed up the matter as follows:

> Only that state will live and have a future which knows how to train its growing youth to become citizens of the state in the best sense of the word, that is, to become citizens who, full of genuine love and loyalty to country and with true devotion to the fatherland, are determined to live not for themselves alone but to serve with heart and understanding the welfare of the people as a whole.[21]

[21] *Der Staatsbürger,* 1. Jhrg., Nr. 1 (May 16, 1917), S. 2.

To meet the need so long and keenly felt for more effective civic training, a new and extremely interesting educational device, known as "citizenship courses" *(Staatsbürgerkurse)*, was evolved in 1910, and has since attained a remarkable development in Eastern Switzerland. The first experiment of this nature was undertaken in Basel, closely followed by Biel and Bern. In 1913 the diet of the Independent Democrats *(Freisinnige)*, held at Biel, devoted a large share of attention to the problem of political education, and the party has since given vigorous support to the citizenship courses. Since 1919 the new Peasants' party has also taken them up. During the first period of the movement instruction was carried on by local bodies whose only bond of association was a yearly meeting of leaders. In 1924, however, it had grown to such proportions that a federal organization, the Association of Swiss Citizenship Courses (Verein der schweizerischen Staatsbürgerkurse) was formed.

At present the Association is made up of twenty-seven active units, each of which conducts a course in one of the cities or towns of Eastern Switzerland. All the larger centers in that part of the country—Zürich, Basel, Bern, St. Gallen and Luzern—are represented, and in addition a score of smaller places are enrolled in the movement, some of which rank as scarcely more than villages. Each local course is in charge of a leader, assisted usually by a committee. In some cities (Bern, Burgdorf, Murgenthal, Zürich) participants in the courses are given a vote in selecting officers and deciding policies. According to the constitution of the central organization, it is the purpose of the Association

> to promote political education by the extension and integration of citizenship courses with the end that the youth of the country may become nationally-minded citizens; and to place in the center of their efforts the principles of the liberal view of things in general and the standards of the Independent Democratic conception of the state in particular.[22]

Opponents of citizenship courses have always pointed to the last clause of the foregoing statement as proof that they are in reality simply adroit methods of party propaganda in the interest of the Liberals and Independent Democrats. Indeed, the more virulent Socialists have denounced them as "schemes to stupefy the people"; the more virulent clericals as "schools for heretics." Such sweeping denunciations, needless to say, are without justification. It is true, of course, that the new movement is promoted chiefly by Independent Democrats, although in some cities (Bern, Burgdorf, Langenthal), other middle-class parties co-operate; while in still others, as, for example, in St. Gallen, it is completely free from any party connection. It is further true that the dislike of the Swiss for vigorous political leaders, and particularly for candidates obviously too active in their own interest, makes it necessary for parties which desire to increase their membership to resort to roundabout and indirect methods. The general effect of the lectures delivered in citizenship courses is plainly in favor of the existing state system, and to that extent helpful to the parties maintaining it. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that they have high value from a purely educational point of view, and that, as the literature of the Association announces, they are free from directly partisan or confessional propaganda. Both Socialists and clericals, as we have had occasion to note, use lectures largely in their propagandist work, although not under the heading of citizenship courses, and such lectures are admittedly partisan.

---

[22] *Statuten des Vereins der schweizerischen Staatsbürgerkurse* (1924), p. 1.

A consideration of the topics usually discussed by speakers in citizenship courses affords the best basis for deciding whether or not they are primarily educational or partisan in purpose. At Zürich during the winter of 1927–28, the following program was presented: "Romance Swiss Evening," by the Club Romand of Zürich; "Changes in the Federal Constitution and Democracy," by Professor Fritz Fleiner, University of Zürich; "Political and Ordinary Crimes and the Right of Asylum," by Dr. Otto Zoller, advocate, Zürich; "Commercial Politics," by Dr. B. Pfister, St. Gallen, member of the National Council; "Industrial Welfare Work for the Laboring Class," by Mr. J. Bally, manufacturer, Schönewerd; "Present Condition of Agriculture and Its Relation to the Modern Economic World," by Dr. R. König, member of the National Council and scientific assistant in the Swiss Peasant secretariat, Brugg; "Free Trade, Protection, and the World Economic Conference," by Dr. Arthur Steinmann, Zürich; "Sport and Politics," by Mr. Hans Buchli, editor-in-chief of *Sport*, Zürich; "Public Rights and Duties of Swiss Women," by Miss A. L. Gruetter, Bern; "National Defense," by Federal Councilor K. Scheurer, Bern; "Bridge Building and Its Significance," by Dr. L. Bendel, engineer, Zürich; "Women as Consumers," by Mrs. Vischer-Alioth, Arlesheim; "Witzwil, an Example of Inner Colonization by Prisoners and Unemployed," by Director Kellerhals, Witzwil; "What Demands May a Large City Make upon a Surgical Clinic," by Professor Paul Clairmont, chief physician of the Zürich Cantonal Hospital; "Art Industries and Standardization," by Mr. F. Gubler, central secretary of the Swiss Labor Federation, Zürich; "Decay of Teeth and Dental Care," by Professor Stoppany, director of the Dental Institute, Zürich; "Swiss Popular Costumes," by Mrs. J. Heierli, Erlenbach; "Schubert Evening," by Mr. K. F. Langemann, Zürich. It is by no means an uncommon feature of citizenship courses to invite three or four speakers for the same evening in order that various aspects of a moot question may be fairly presented, although no case of the sort occurs in the foregoing list. The Zürich program for 1927–28, quoted above, concludes with a cordial invitation to attend the course addressed to Swiss citizens of both sexes who are beyond school age, and also to resident foreigners who may wish to familiarize themselves with the peculiar institutions of the country.

Lest the program quoted above may seem too erudite and lengthy, it should be said at once that ample provision is made in all courses for lighter recreational features. Also, the number of lectures included in the Zürich list (nineteen for 1927–28) is exceptionally large, owing, no doubt, to the abundant resources, both educational and financial, which are available in that city. Smaller centers of population content themselves as a rule with from six to ten meetings each winter. Two or three evenings may be set aside for the presentation of a play or comic opera in the city theater, for recitals by noted soloists and concerts by local orchestras, or for readings by noted authors from their own works. Travelogues, illustrated with still and moving pictures, are popular, at least one appearing on the winter's programs of several towns. While usually devoted to some foreign country, the more remote parts of Switzerland, particularly Graubünden and Ticino, are often made the subjects of these talks, in which case displays of native costumes and the singing of folk songs peculiar to the two southernmost cantons are added, always to the evident delight of the audience.

Besides lectures and evening entertainments, arrangements are made as a rule for four or more daylight excursions at reduced rates, which are offered in connection with each course. These may be in the nature of outings, but more frequently they take the form of pilgrimages to historic spots or buildings, to museums or picture galleries, to public works such as post-offices, prisons, gas and electric plants, or to private industrial and commercial establishments. All excursions are accompanied by an authority on the places visited, who makes the necessary explanations; or the party is met by the heads of institutions who show them through their establishments. Such *Ausflüge* are always greatly enjoyed and contribute largely to the success of the citizenship courses. Finally, it is the custom of the committees in charge to arrange for the celebration of various holidays, especially the Federal

Festival of August 1. On these gala occasions the evening is given over wholly to music, singing, one-act plays, the reading of dialect poems—the whole topped off with a ball "*und allerlei Luschtigs und Schöns,*" as one program puts it.

Other devices have been employed with good effect to interest the younger element in citizenship courses. At Zürich it has been customary to form an orchestra among participants which is called upon to furnish music on special occasions. In a number of cities lectures are given from time to time by personnel experts on the choice of vocations by young men and women. Members of the committee in charge of courses are called upon frequently by younger participants for advice on their own economic problems, as well as on political problems. While adding greatly to the burdens of course directors, the personal relations thus formed are pleasant and helpful in themselves and, no doubt, contribute materially to the influence of the movement.

When all is said and done, however, it remains true that certain of the lectures are considered somewhat too dry by the younger element which it is the prime purpose of the citizenship courses to attract; undoubtedly they are more appreciated in general by persons of mature years. Too much weight should not be laid upon this point, for the young Swiss is a much more serious-minded person than the young American; moreover, the Swiss, both young and old, are habituated to and seem to enjoy an educational approach to political questions. Their liking for instruction and the painstaking, thoroughgoing way in which they assimilate it is a constant source of surprise to visitors from other democracies.

The educational quality of the lectures given in citizenship courses is always the highest attainable. To persons familiar with leaders of Swiss thought the names of those participating in the Zürich program for 1927–28 will be sufficient evidence of its great value on this score. As a rule men of prominence in any field of public interest are called upon several times a year to address audiences in the different cities which provide citizenship courses. For the convenience of local committees the central association prepares annually a list of lecturers who are willing to appear under its auspices. For 1927–28 the list contains sixty-seven names, among them members of the Federal Council, Council of States, and National Council, heads of federal, cantonal, and local administrative departments, party secretaries, engineers, foresters, aviators, manufacturers, merchants, professors, teachers in cantonal and city schools, preachers, doctors, lawyers, editors, authors, travelers, historians, and leaders of the woman suffrage movement. Whenever any question of public importance comes up, the committees in charge of citizenship courses seem to have no difficulty in drawing upon the greatest authorities of the country to discuss it. On occasion the federal president himself has appeared as a lecturer under their auspices.

In the great majority of cases lecturers in citizenship courses serve without compensation. Those who come from a distance receive traveling and hotel expenses, with sometimes a modest honorarium in addition. In a few cities public officials have placed halls for meetings at the disposal of local committees without charge or at a minimum cost, but elsewhere rentals must be paid. It is remarkable, however, at what low cost more than a score of courses, including some two hundred lectures, are presented to thousands of auditors each year. Thus the financial report of the St. Gallen committee for 1926–27 showed that the total expenditures for the six lectures of that season amounted to only $150, of which a third went for honorariums, a quarter for rentals, another quarter for advertising and printing, and the remainder for the use of moving-picture machines, correspondence, postage, and other miscellaneous items.[23]

In some cases citizenship courses are thrown open to the public without charge. The better practice, however, is to make them, as far as possible, self-sustaining by the sale of tickets, occasional deficits being met by voluntary contributions. A profit is out of the question, for the cost of admission is purposely kept at an extremely low point in order to encourage attendance by young persons even of the poorest classes. Thus for the Zürich course, which includes nineteen or twenty lectures, season tickets now cost $1.00, and formerly only 60 cents. Tickets good for a single evening are also available at a slightly higher proportionate rate, usually 10 cents each. Of course, additional fees are charged for the excursions offered in connection with the lecture program, but these also are kept at the lowest possible figure by securing special railroad or motor-bus and hotel rates. At such prices, needless to say, friends of the movement are usually called upon annually to contribute to its support. However, such gifts are always in small amounts, the largest individual contribution recorded on the books of the central association being $10.00. Three cities—Bern, Biel, and Thun—guarantee small subsidies from the municipal treasury in aid of the movement. In 1925 an appeal was made by the national association to the Federal Council for an annual subsidy of $1,000 for the maintenance and extension of citizenship courses. It was refused principally on the grounds (1) that the federal legislature had issued instructions against further subsidies except in cases of absolute necessity and (2) that the granting of the Association's request would lead to numerous appeals of a similar sort from other organizations.[24] Although not stated, possibly the fact that the movement is accused of partisanship by its enemies had something to do with the decision of the Federal Council. It is true, however, that grants have been made by the central government in aid of other organizations of no inconsiderable political influence. In the opinion of many friends of the citizenship courses it is not to be regretted that a federal subsidy was refused in 1925. With such aid the movement could scarcely have avoided the criticism that it reflected government policies.

---

[23] *Der Staatsbürger,* 11. Jhrg., Nr. 13 (July 1, 1927), S. 107.

Citizenship courses have so far been confined to eastern Switzerland. This does not mean, however, that civic instruction by public lectures is unknown in other sections of the country. Several years ago a movement was instituted to educate the youth of Geneva and Lausanne who were beyond school age to take an interest in party affairs. It was abandoned in favor of a plan whereby young men of sixteen years and over were invited to attend regular party meetings in the hope that they might learn by observation and become enthusiasts for the cause. They were, of course, not permitted to vote in such assemblages until they were twenty-one; and, as little attention seems to have been paid to them, the movement languished. Recently there has been a recurrence of interest in the matter, and political lectures for the instruction of young members of the Radical party are being offered again in the western cantons. The Democratic Circle of Lausanne, for example, arranges each winter for a number of addresses by eminent statesmen, which are given not only in the city itself but also in other places throughout Canton Vaud.

Whatever future the movement may have in the Romance section of the country, it is safe to say that the French equivalent of the Germanic title, *Staatsbürgerkurse*, will not be used there. It is a peculiar fact that the word "state" is used by the Swiss to refer to the federal government only. They do not apply it to the cantonal governments, as we in the United States do to the state governments. Hence the title *Staatsbürgerkurse* means rather more than the colorless "citizenship courses" employed as its equivalent in these pages; unfortunately, it smacks of centralization, and centralization is abhorrent to Romance Switzerland. This, in spite of the fact that the promoters of the citizenship courses in the eastern section of the country are by no means committed to the federal side of every political question, nor do they seek to teach that attitude. On the contrary, whenever any such question arises, they are quite likely to divide on it, although in general it is true that the word "state" and the policy of centralization arouse no such antagonism among the German as among the French Swiss.

---

[24] *Der Staatsbürger,* 9. Jhrg., Nr. 22 (December 1, 1925), S. 191.

In part, the antagonism of the Catholic clericals (Schweizerische Konservative Volkspartei) to the citizenship-course movement is based on the same ground. Nevertheless, their jealousy for states' rights does not prevent them from using lectures for propagandist purposes. In doing so, however, the clericals avoid the term "citizenship courses," calling them "lectures for Christian culture." Socialists agree with clericals in criticizing citizenship courses—not, of course, because they are centralizing in tendency but because in the main they uphold the existing order. However, the Socialists, as has been pointed out,[25] use lectures freely not only to gain party members but also to train party leaders. And in the case of both clericals and socialists, the degree of partisanship involved in the instruction offered is admittedly greater. Indeed, one of the reasons commonly advanced in favor of citizenship courses under the auspices of middle-class parties is that unless such courses are maintained and extended the youth of the country will fall too largely under the influence of radicals, or clericals. Thus, an enthusiastic young advocate of civic education complained in 1927 that the older leaders of the Independent Democratic (Freisinnige-demokratische) party did little to attract the youth of the country, rather, indeed, thrusting it aside; whereas, in the other larger parties, particularly the Catholic Conservative and Social Democratic parties, a totally different attitude prevailed. "The former," he added, "begins its youth work even before the child is born."[26]

While the chief emphasis of the citizenship-course movement is laid upon lectures, it deserves great credit also for its numerous publications. Chief among these is the bi-monthly organ, *Der Staatsbürger*, which is issued under the auspices of the national association.[27] It is a vigorously edited eight-page journal which serves as a clearing house for citizenship courses in all the centers where they are maintained, and in addition publishes many valuable articles, usually in German but sometimes in French, dealing with a wide range of social, educational, and political questions. The more important of the articles appearing in *Der Staatsbürger* are reprinted in pamphlet form for free distribution or for sale at the lowest possible price. Among them one notes as particularly valuable a handbook on the federal constitution, containing the full text of that document prefaced by a careful introduction in simple language, and supplemented by an illuminating exposé of existing tax laws and by a table giving all initiative and referendum votes since 1848, the whole admirably indexed for ready reference.[28]

---

[25] See chap. iv.

[26] Herr cand. jur. Müller, leader of the citizenship courses in Bern, in *Der Staatsbürger,* 11. Jhrg., Nr. 13 (July 1, 1927), S. 104.

[27] It is edited by Herr Rektor A. Wyss, Beaumont 19, Biel.

To sum up, Swiss citizenship courses are unquestionably a valuable addition to the educational resources of the country. On the whole, they seem to be more successful in their appeal to adults than to the young, for whom they were intended primarily. True, they are not "courses" in the rather narrow sense attached to that term in American colleges and universities, but they do present enough materials in two or three annual programs to convey a fair knowledge of the political institutions and issues of Switzerland. In addition they contain much of value on social, economic, artistic, and literary topics; and the whole is so leavened by musical and recreational features as to be palatable to persons of average intelligence. Compared to their educational quality, the degree of partisanship involved in citizenship courses is slight, and what there is of it is indirect, leading to the support of the existing order rather than to activity in given parties. Whatever criticism may be justified on this score is more than offset by the directly partisan educational activities of clericals and socialists.

It is to be regretted that larger funds from private sources are not available so that the movement might be extended to other cities and towns in German Switzerland, introduced into the French- and Italian-speaking sections of the country, and given a press in all three languages. At present it seems to have come to a standstill in its original territory, with about three thousand regular participants annually, although, of course, the number of casual attendants is much larger. Even so, the movement has attained a development in Switzerland which would scarcely be possible in any other country. Something of the same sort was attempted in Germany before the war, and a considerable literature of periodicals and pamphlets resulted. In the United States the nearest approach to citizenship courses is being made by the League of Women Voters. It will be recalled also that in 1912 the Progressive party announced a plan for educational propaganda not confined to the campaign period but to be carried on continuously during the whole four years from one presidential election to the next. Unfortunately, with the collapse of Roosevelt's following it was allowed to lapse. It may be doubted, however, whether it could have succeeded in any event. Americans prefer to take their politics as they once took their liquor—straight—with periods of recuperation between quadrennial sprees. The unusual degree of success attained by citizenship courses in Switzerland is attributable fundamentally to the continuity of the people's interest in politics, which with them is never "adjourned"; and also to the conviction, in which they excel every other nation, that the best approach to all the problems of life is educational.

---

[28] "Schweizerische Bundesverfassung," by National Councilor Otto Hunziker, in *Schriften für staatsbürgerliche Bildung* (3d ed.; Chur: Verlag d. *Staatsbürger,* 1927), Nr. 2.

BOY SCOUTS (PFADFINDER)

Boys' clubs and groups of various kinds have long been known in Switzerland. In 1912 a new impetus was given to work in this field by the introduction into the Romance Section of the country of the Boy Scout (Pfadfinder) movement. A year later the German-speaking sections followed the example of their western neighbors. The two movements coalesced in October, 1913, and a Swiss Boy Scout League covering the whole country was established with headquarters in Bern. It is affiliated with the World Boy Scout League, and participates in the international "jamborees" held every four years under the auspices of the latter.

As in other countries which have enlisted under the Scout banner, the Swiss have followed closely the plans originally worked out for English boys by the founder, Sir Robert Baden-Powell. His manual, *Boy Scouts: A Handbook for the Training of Good Citizens*, was translated into German especially for the use of boys in the sections of the country speaking that language. Within three years the first edition of the translation was exhausted and a second, issued in 1926, became necessary.[29] A briefer manual, the *Swiss Boy Scout Booklet*,[30] has also enjoyed a large circulation. The latter contains matters common to such treatises in other countries, among which, by the way, may be noted the strongest possible condemnation of the use of tobacco or alcohol. In addition there are a number of sections adapted to local needs, e.g., an excellent brief set of rules for mountain-climbing and sketches of Swiss history and civics, the latter much briefer than discussions of the same topics to be found even in elementary textbooks used in the schools.

---

[29] *Pfadfinder, ein Handbuch zur Erziehung zum tüchtigen Staatsbürger,* authorized translation by Dr. Arnold Schrag, inspector of secondary schools in Bern, published by the Polygraphischer Verlag, A.G., Bern.

[30] *Schweizer Pfadfinderbüchlein* by Ernst Thilo, *Oberfeldmeister* in Moudon (Bern: Ernst Bircher, A.G., 1926).

Following its introduction in 1912–13, the Boy Scout movement spread rapidly throughout Switzerland, reaching an enrolment in 1926 of 6,024 members. Relative to the total population, however, the latter figure represents an interest in the organization less than a quarter of that existing in the United States. On the other hand, there are proportionately twice as many Scouts in Switzerland as in Italy, and four times as many as in France. Compared with the smaller European countries, Switzerland takes precedence in this connection over Belgium, Greece, Holland, and Sweden, but is itself exceeded by Denmark and Norway.[31] Organizations of Girl Guides, corresponding to our own Girl Scouts, have also proved popular among the Swiss, their membership reaching 1,486 in 1926. No doubt the rapid extension of these movements in Switzerland was favored by the extraordinary attractiveness of the country for camping out, and by the habit, long since established in the schools, of organized hiking participated in by all pupils from the lowest grades onward.[32] Frequent visits to historic spots, museums, and armories are also made by Swiss Scouts.

Within the last few years Switzerland has begun to enjoy favor as a summer world-center of the organization. At Kandersteg in the Bernese Oberland, an International Scout Châlet was bought and equipped in 1922 with funds contributed by interested members in several countries. A training school, which enjoys an excellent reputation, is maintained in connection with the châlet. During the summer of 1925 nearly one thousand visiting scouts were entertained at Kandersteg. A year later the manifold attractions of the place led to its selection for the meeting of an international conference which, in the opinion of American participants, was one of the most important gatherings in the history of the movement. More than one hundred delegates, representing thirty-two countries, were in attendance. Three delegates sent by the League of Nations referred frequently during the sessions to the interest of the League in the Scout movement. Among the important actions of the conference was the admission of Mexico to membership, and the outlining of a plan for the admission of Germany before the next meeting. The thorny problem of "minority scouts," i.e., of members who find themselves confronted with a demand to swear allegiance to governments other than those of which they had been nationals prior to the Treaty of Versailles, also came up for consideration. The interest of the Swiss government in the Kandersteg conference was manifested by a formal luncheon offered to the delegates at which Federal President Heinrich Haeberlin delivered an eloquent address, taking for his theme the influence of the movement upon the citizenry of the world.

---

[31] For detailed figures see *Report of the Committee on Foreign Relations, Boy Scouts of America, 1926,* pp. 11, 12.

[32] For an account of these school excursions, see chap. vii.

In Switzerland, as elsewhere, the Boy Scout organization has been attacked on the ground that it cultivates ultra-patriotic and militaristic sentiments in the minds of impressionable youngsters. Among school teachers, a considerable number of whom are avowed pacifists, there is some opposition to the organization in spite of the emphasis which it lays on self-direction and character development, both aims which are highly regarded in current educational theory. On the other hand, many teachers are warm friends of the movement and participate in its activities. One of the most distinguished of the latter, Dr. Mousson, educational director of Zürich and also an administrative councilor of the canton, warmly defended it when it was under fire in the council in 1916. So far as the cultivation of ultra-patriotic sentiment is concerned, friends of the organization assert that scouting, as its name implies, is essentially designed to develop individual qualities of strength, resourcefulness, and self-reliance, and hence makes little, if any, use of the methods of the drillmaster. Sir Robert Baden-Powell himself presents this argument strongly in the manual prepared for the English movement, and it is repeated in similar works designed for use in Switzerland.[33]

As to the cultivation of ultra-patriotic sentiment, a study of the literature on the subject shows that the movement in Switzerland is much less open to attack than in England or the United States. The shorter manual referred to above, prepared by a Swiss author, Ernst Thilo, exclusively for Swiss use, devotes a maximum of space to life in the open and a minimum to patriotic sentiment. In addition to the very brief sketches of history and of civics referred to above, the only topics of a nationalistic character which it treats are the clause in the oath pledging loyalty to the fatherland, a fourteen-page collection of patriotic and scout songs—chiefly the latter—and a four-page history of the origin of the Swiss flag. No elaborate instructions in flag ritual and no ceremony of saluting the flag are included. The historical section of the little book mentions achievements in the arts of peace as well as in those of war, and is wholly free from the tendency to justify and glorify every military enterprise in which the Swiss participated.

[33] *Op. cit.*, p. 354.

In the latter respect especially, it presents the sharpest possible contrast to the corresponding pages of a manual widely distributed a few years ago throughout the United States,[34] the contents of which would command the enthusiastic approval of Mayor Thompson of Chicago. Instead of narrow chauvinism, one finds in the Swiss booklet the following sentences, which give the keynote of its entire discussion of patriotism:

> It has become always more clear to us that in order to devote what is best in us to the fatherland we must love it with all our strength. Yet we look forward also to a future in which all the peoples, like the Scouts of the whole world, will extend the hand of brotherhood to each other.[35]

A very striking example of the way in which the Swiss have modified to meet their own needs the doctrines of scouting as expounded for use in England and elsewhere may be observed in the translation of Sir Robert Baden-Powell's manual. Most readers in other countries at least would agree that chapter ix of the latter, devoted to patriotism, is rather strongly impregnated with British imperial sentiment. Evidently the Swiss translator found it so; nevertheless, as in duty bound, he transcribes it faithfully, prefacing it however with a statement in detail of his own grounds of dissent. He observes,

> We should never forget that the author [Baden-Powell] writes as an English patriot, that he sees the world and its affairs with his own eyes. His right to do so we must admit. In return we lay claim to the right to look at conditions, men, and events, in the light in which they appear to us. That all imperialistic purposes are abhorrent to the translator may be deduced from his nationality.[36]

With the outbreak of the World War in 1914 and the mobilization of a large part of the vigorous manhood of Switzerland for guard duty on the frontier, the Boy Scouts of the country were afforded an opportunity to demonstrate the value of their training. They were called upon for a great variety of services, chiefly as telegraph, bank, military, and police messengers, in which lines of duty they used their bicycles to excellent advantage. They were also employed largely in lighter duties at railroad stations and in railroad service. In a number of cities they aided in milk delivery, thereby preventing a serious shortage and a considerable increase of the infant death-rate. City boys, often of gentle parentage, went out into the peasant districts and helped to care for cattle, to mow the hay, and to save crops that otherwise, owing to the large shortage of field workers, would have rotted on the ground. A corps of older Boy Scouts were set to work in the great marsh near Morat marking roads and paths, building light bridges, and entering these improvements on the map of the General Staff. In all these enterprises the organization proved the genuineness of its desire to be of use; nor can there be any doubt of the worth of the services rendered by its members.[37]

---

[34] *Boy Scouts of America, Official Handbook for Boys* (34th printing, May, 1926), chap. x, pp. 442–52. It is evident, however, that the historical discussion contained in this handbook made little, if any, impression upon American boys. The writer has questioned a large number of his students in Swarthmore College on the subject, and their almost invariable reply was that while they read eagerly all it contained on open-air work, they paid no attention whatever to the chapters on United States history. It is a pleasure to note that more recent editions of the American *Official Handbook* are free from super-patriotic historical material.

[35] Ernst Thilo, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[36] Dr. Arnold Schrag, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

THE FREEMASONS

The history of freemasonry in Switzerland began with the establishment of a local lodge at Geneva in 1736. Shortly thereafter several lodges, each independent of the others, were organized, but the movement was brought to a standstill by the French Revolution. Early in the nineteenth century it took a fresh start and soon began to develop on a national scale. The Swiss Grand Lodge Alpina, of Bern, which is completely independent of the mother grand lodge in London, was formed in 1844. According to the most recent estimate available, there were in 1918, thirty-five lodges in Switzerland, with a total of 4,500 members.[38] Most of the latter are reported to be drawn from "the working middle class in the best sense of the word: merchants and manufacturers, doctors and lawyers, government officials, teachers and preachers."[39]

Among the innumerable social organizations of Switzerland, none is subject to more constant criticism than Freemasonry. Two very peppery propagandist sheets (one published in German, the other in French) keep it constantly under fire.[40] With true *odium-theologicum* its clerical opponents denounce it as "cursed sect," "a devastating pest," and—to cap the climax—"the Synagogue of Satan." They hold it to be "a highly dangerous conspiracy, bent upon the annihilation of Church and State." In Switzerland, as elsewhere, politics makes strange bedfellows; nevertheless, it does come with a shock of surprise to find Communists and Socialists agreeing with Catholic Conservatives in opposing Masonry. To the followers of Marx the order is merely "a tool of capitalism," "a train-bearer of banking capital and the stock exchanges."

---

[37] A charming account written for boys of the work done by Scouts during the mobilization period may be found in Niklaus Bolt, *Allzeit bereit* (Stuttgart: Steinkopf, 1927), pp. 171–78.

[38] "Staatsbürgerkurse und Freimaurerei," in *Der Staatsbürger,* 1. Jhrg., Nr. 20 (March 1, 1918), p. 155.

[39] Arnold Wirth, "Geschichte, Wesen und Ziele der Freimaurerei," in *Der Staatsbürger,* 7. Jhrg., No. 20 (October 16, 1922), S. 170.

[40] One of these, the *Schweizerbanner,* published bi-monthly in Zürich, attacks Masonry on the familiar ground that it is largely Semitic and internationalistic; the other is published in Geneva under the title of the *Pilori,* which defines its character exactly.

It may be objected to the foregoing characterizations that, while vigorous and picturesque, they are altogether lacking in definiteness and detail. Most of the published attacks upon Masonry in Switzerland are of this type. Nevertheless, one writer on administrative law does enter somewhat into specifications.[41] In his opinion the Freemasons are, for the most part, persons of weight in the community who have banded themselves together to exercise influence in politics—cantonal, national, and foreign—and to control in their own interests the economic life of the country generally. Originally enemies of the Jesuits, they have adopted the tactics of the latter to such an extent that at present they do not hesitate to enter into alliances with their ancient antagonists in order to satisfy their lust for wealth and dominion. In place of the true federal government of the country, the members of the order are alleged to plot the establishment of a political hybrid, a base mixture of constitutional popular rule and illegitimate clique control, of direct democracy and secret Masonic despotism. They are further accused of aiding each other in matters of appointment and promotion in the civil and military service, and of pushing or opposing legislative projects according as their interests are involved. In particular, the Masons are asserted to have been hostile to the extension of popular rights (the initiative and referendum) and to proportional representation.

Undeniably there is widespread suspicion and dislike of Masonry in Switzerland—not enough, indeed, to lead to a separate political movement similar to our own Anti-Masonic party of a century ago, but quite enough for effective use in a variety of political exigencies. Whatever element of truth there may be in assertions that members of the order seek to influence legislation, certain it is that their enemies lose no occasion to make political capital out of such assertions. A striking instance occurred during the referendum campaign of 1920 over the proposal to enter the League of Nations.[42] Clerical opponents of the measure disseminated widely an argument to the effect that since Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and President Wilson were all notorious Freemasons, the League itself must be a Freemasonic conspiracy against God, religion, and the pope! Personal attacks are also made, usually in the form of "whispering campaigns" but sometimes openly, upon candidates alleged to belong to the order. An instance which aroused wide comment occurred prior to the by-election for a seat in the municipal administrative council of Zürich, held on January 15, 1928. On this occasion the accusations came from Socialists and Communists, who succeeded in electing their candidate by the unprecedented majority of nearly ten thousand over the candidate of the combined Independent (Freisinnige), Democratic, Christian, and Evangelical Peoples' parties. It is, of course, impossible to say how far the anti-Masonic attacks contributed to the result, as many other issues were involved. Nevertheless, they were deemed so serious that the lodges of Zürich resorted to the unusual, if not unprecedented, step of issuing a formal protest following the election.

---

[41] L. Jenny, *Die Verwaltungsrechtspflege in der schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft* (Glarus, 1910), pp. v–vii.

It is obvious that the more sweeping denunciations of Freemasonry current in Switzerland are mere party claptrap. Judging by the sources from which they come and also by statements regarding the classes represented most largely in the order, its membership must be in general sympathy with the Independent Democratic (Freisinnige), and Liberal parties. However, according to the rather indignant protest issued by the lodges of Zürich following the by-election of January 15, 1928, "it is certainly not unknown to the Social Democracy that members of that party also have affiliated themselves from motives of conviction with Freemasonry." This statement, by the way, was received with unholy joy by the Communists as proof of the time-serving tactics employed by certain Socialists. Whatever degree of truth it may contain, certainly the Social Democratic party does not hesitate to use the anti-Masonic argument at every opportunity in attacking conservative candidates and measures. It seems altogether probable that the latter lose more than they gain politically by their connection with the order. If, as alleged above, the Masons were opposed to the extension of popular rights and to proportional representation, they were only a small part of the political elements which for various motives took the same stand; nor was the combined opposition to these measures destined to prevail in the end.

---

[42] See communication by the author, "Swiss Referendum on the League of Nations," in the *American Political Science Review,* XIV (August, 1920), 477.

Further, it is alleged that, owing to their social prominence, economic influence, and high official position, the Masons are able to exert an occult power wholly out of proportion to their extremely small numbers. On this point the Swiss themselves differ widely. One informant will assert with entire conviction that the order is constantly growing in membership and strength; another, with equal conviction, that it is constantly becoming weaker and is now almost wholly without influence. On the basis of such conflicting testimony it is difficult to form an opinion, especially about an organization which avoids publicity as far as possible. That Swiss Masons are in politics to an extent unknown in the United States is evident. Even the friends of the order admit that its members seek to aid each other in matters of appointment and promotion to civil and military posts. In the absence of the spoils system, however, it seems doubtful that this sort of manipulation is either common or dangerous. That Masons interest themselves as such in legislation to further their selfish interests is not so commonly asserted or believed. Owing to their somewhat restricted social and political environment and to their close association within the lodges, it is probably true that they do assume a fairly unified attitude on public issues. As already indicated, however, the fact that they have done so, or a mere suspicion to that effect, is certain to be exploited noisily by the opposition and, in the end, to cost more votes than are gained. On the other hand, the assertion still heard sometimes in the United States, to the effect that members of secret societies receive favors at the hands of judges in civil or criminal cases, is seldom if ever urged against the Masons in Switzerland.

The situation of Swiss Masonry is a particularly exposed one because it stands alone. If there were fifty-seven other varieties of secret societies, as in the United States, it would be lost in the crowd, and politicians of our familiar "joiner" type might flourish. Also, the order suffers because it is the general practice in Switzerland to conceal the identity of members. In a few cases individuals are known to belong to it, but the public wearing of badges or insignia is avoided. According to common report, the fact that a man is a member may not be made known until after his death, when it is revealed by the placing of a white rose upon his coffin or by anonymous reference to him as "our departed brother." No doubt this secrecy contributes materially to the suspicion with which the order is regarded.

In spite of the frequency with which Masonry is attacked, it is the almost invariable practice of the order not to make reply. This attitude, by the way, gives rise occasionally to the accusation that the leaders of the organization are somewhat too complacent. An exception to the policy of silence occurred, as noted above, following the by-election in Zürich of January 15, 1928. In the latter case a statement was issued in the name of the four local lodges and bore the signatures of their presiding officers.[43] It asserted that

> the Freemasonic lodge is a union of men standing upon a patriotic foundation and eschewing in rule and practice party politics of every description. . . . . Its aim and purpose is to promote the ennoblement of the relations of man to man through the self-education of its members and to contribute to the strengthening of international solidarity. . . . . Further, we protest firmly against the accusation that Freemasonry pursues anti-Christian tendencies. If it is a question of the spirit of the gospel, the Swiss Freemasonic lodges have again and again made known their devotion to it.

On other occasions semi-official public statements have been made regarding the purposes of the order, usually emphasizing its tolerant, humanitarian, and non-partisan character. One of these quotes from the rules of the Grand Lodge Alpina, as follows:

> The Freemason is devoted frankly and loyally to his fatherland; the Swiss Freemason especially recognizes it as a holy duty to co-operate according to his powers toward the preservation of internal peace and the furtherance of true progress in the fatherland, and likewise toward the maintenance of its freedom and independence through reasonable means and with especial moderation in word, writing, and deed.
>
> The order recognizes the political differences in the fatherland in their political justification; it wishes neither to abrogate, erase, nor destroy these differences. On the other hand, it does seek to reduce their mutual friction by subordinating them to the higher viewpoint of patience and tolerance for the views of others.

It is hardly to be expected that such utterances as the foregoing should disarm the opponents of Freemasonry in Switzerland. The antagonism is too intimately bound up with both ancient religious differences and modern class struggles to be resolved merely by fine words. As one manifestation of intolerance among a people at heart profoundly tolerant, it is of particular interest. But the degree of intolerance involved is slight; certainly it is infinitesimally small as compared with that manifested by certain elements in the United States against Catholics, Jews, negroes, and foreigners. Any threatening public manifestation of anti-Masonic feeling is out of the question in Switzerland. Intense feeling on the subject is confined to the less intelligent, and even they are mild, indeed, as compared to a 100 per cent

---

[43] Published in the *Zürcher Post* of January 25, 1928.

American Ku Klux Klansman. In conversation with better-informed Swiss citizens, no matter how far apart their views of the question may be, one is always assured that they are not misled by the noisy clamor occasionally raised against the Masons for political effect. On the other hand, it must be admitted that there is a certain democratic logic in the opposition to secret societies. Rousseau himself condemned somewhat sweepingly "partial societies within the state," adding that "if there are such societies, it is best to have as many of them as possible."[44] Unquestionably, the Swiss as a whole accept this principle, as shown not only by their opposition to Masonry but also by their fear of powerful personalities and their antagonism to large-scale private business.

---

[44] *Social Contract,* Book II, chap. iii.

CHAPTER XI

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND THE PRESS

LANGUAGE

It is a common remark among the Swiss that their state is founded upon a frank negation of the idea of nationality dominant in the world today. Undoubtedly they take a certain pride in the higher political synthesis which they have achieved in spite of language, confessional, and geographic barriers. Nor, indeed, can one blame them, considering the "megalomaniac nationalism" rampant in so many countries, the part it played in the bloody fruitage of the World War, the constant tyrannies, great or petty, subsequently imposed by racial majorities, and the equally constant protests vociferously made by oppressed minorities.

Stirred by such menacing antagonisms, not a few Swiss look forward to a world-solution—to be brought about, perhaps, through the League of Nations—based upon the federal solution of their own problem. Millennial dreams, one may say, utopian speculations strangely at variance with the soberness of the customary political thought of the country, yet not without justification in the remarkable success which they have achieved in overcoming racial and linguistic separatism. Occasionally foreign observers, inspired by Swiss methods, propose their application elsewhere. For example, Wilhelm Schäfer, a German writer, suggests the possibility of a federal union between Germany, France, and Italy, similar to that worked out within Switzerland by peoples speaking the languages of these countries, thus forming a great occidental European state, the representative of western civilization as against the eastern socialism of Moscow.[1]

Some consideration must be given the assertion that the Swiss state negates the contemporary nation-idea. If one accepts sweeping definitions of the latter term, there can be no doubt that it is correct. To take the epigrammatic statement of J. W. Burgess, for example, the Swiss are anything but "a population of an ethnic unity, inhabiting a territory of a geographic unity."[2] A territory more sundered by giant physical barriers would be difficult to find, nor does the population conform, except in small part, to the tests detailed under "ethnic unity," viz., "a common language and literature, a common tradition and history, a common custom, and a common consciousness of rights and wrongs." "Common consciousness of rights and wrongs" is a somewhat vague phrase, susceptible of ethical, juridic, or historical interpretations, and applicable to the Swiss chiefly in a particularistic sense. Also, they fail to qualify as possessing a "common custom"; in this respect diversity characterizes them to a striking degree. Similarly with regard to "common traditions," which are as various as their cantons. A "common history" they have had as a whole only since 1815, and Swiss writers themselves often raise the question as to whether one may speak of a national history prior to that time. So frequent was civil strife under the Old Confederation, and at so late a date did some of the cantons enter it—often only after having opposed it again and again in battle—that history teaching is a decidedly thorny matter in the public schools of the country to this day. Most of all, of course, the Swiss fail to meet the test, usually counted the most important, of a "common language and literature." Instead, they have a minor part in three literatures and speak three national languages, to say nothing of Rhaeto-Romanic and some seventy dialects.

---

[1] *Briefe aus der Schweiz*, p. 115.

[2] *Political Science and Constitutional Law*, I, 1.

Taking definitions of nationality which shift the emphasis from causes of unity to the resultant unity itself, the Swiss come off rather better. M. Ernst Renan, in his Sorbonne address of 1880 on "*Qu' est ce qu' une nation*," for example, declared that "it was not community of language and race which makes a people a nation but the sentiment of a common heritage of memories, whether of achievement and glory or of suffering and sacrifice, together with a desire to live together in the same state and to transmit their heritage to their posterity." There is something essentially Gallic in the phrase: "the sentiment of a common heritage of memories . . . . of achievement and glory" to which the Swiss would subscribe only with reservations, although, of course, they have been familiar enough with suffering and sacrifice imposed upon them by Austrians, by Germans, and, most recently of all, by the French. On the other hand, there can be no doubt of their desire "to live together in the same state and to transmit their heritage to posterity"; indeed, it may be doubted whether they are excelled in this respect by any other people in the world.

Swiss writers who lay claim to the title of "nation" on behalf of their people always emphasize the idea of unity regardless of its origin. Thus H. Weilenmann declares a nation to be

> the "community" of a whole people who whether through common descent and common blood, through the use of the same language, or, like the Swiss

> confederates *(Eidgenossen)*, solely by their own will to belong to the same sovereign state union, have bound themselves together and separated from other peoples.[3]

Thus the Swiss are brought within the pale, but not, however, it will be observed, without the use of a codicil which classifies them as a distinct species of the genus.

As indicated above, the one feature in the achievement of Swiss unity which arouses the greatest interest, not to say amazement, in the outside world, is the overcoming of apparently insuperable language barriers which existed and still exist in their country. Perhaps in this respect foreign observers have been too much influenced by the interminable and sometimes violent squabbles between racial majorities and minorities which have occurred in their own countries particularly as a result of the preaching of narrow and superheated nationalistic doctrines during the nineteenth century. Having escaped such unpleasant experiences, the Swiss are not a little surprised at the praise lavished upon them abroad, being altogether inclined to regard as a commonplace what the rest of the world regards as a political miracle. In the last analysis the Swiss are too modest about the matter. Undoubtedly they deserve high credit, not, indeed, for a preconceived and systematic solution of the question, but rather for the making of countless minor rule-of-thumb adjustments and concessions, most of all perhaps for the tolerant good will with which they have approached the question.

Without depreciation of their merit it may be observed, however, that they were favored historically by several circumstances. For one thing, the problem had scarcely emerged prior to the end of the eighteenth century. Only in the nineteenth century, particularly with the accession to full membership of the cantons of Ticino and Vaud in 1803, and of Valais, Neuchâtel, and Geneva in 1815, did Switzerland become a three-language country. The Old Confederation (1291–1798) was overwhelmingly German, not in the sense that its population spoke a uniform language but in the sense that its innumerable dialects were Teutonic with few exceptions. A piquant illustration of this fact was supplied as early as 1486 by Louis XI. Finding that his crack regiments of Swiss mercenaries were becoming infested by inferior soldiers of fortune from Savoy, Gascony, Lorraine, and elsewhere, he laid down the rule that ability to speak German should thenceforth be considered the test of genuine Swiss origin and that others who enrolled themselves falsely under that trade-mark should be sent to the gallows.[4]

---

[3] *Die vielsprachige Schweiz,* p. 71. Dr. Weilenmann's book, published by the Im Rhein-Verlag (Basel, 1925; 301 pages), is an admirable account, historical in large part but also analytical, of the language experience of the Swiss from the earliest times to the present.

It is only with the advent of democracy and representative government that language minorities are able to make difficulty for ruling majorities. Under the Old Confederation the pure democratic cantons were homogeneous in speech, and hence untroubled by this problem. On the other hand, some of the larger aristocratic cantons had to deal with fractions of their population who spoke French. As the latter were resident for the most part in territories which had been acquired by conquest and were deprived of political rights, they were in no position to make effective protest against the use of German as the official language of government and courts of law.

It does not appear, however, that the Romance inhabitants of subject provinces suffered to any great extent specifically because of their language. Although they were exploited by their Teutonic masters, the purpose of the exploitation was political and economic rather than cultural. At language bridgeheads, as, for example, in Freiburg, some rather mild and quite ineffectual efforts at suppression were made from time to time. Thus a fourteenth-century municipal ordinance forbade children to raise the cry "*Alaman contre Roman*," proving the existence of the youthful gang spirit in that remote age.[5] In 1583 the hawking of market commodities in French was made subject to fine, and six years later steps were taken against the "barbarous and ear-annoying" French intonation of Latin prayers and sermons in church.

With the advent of the Reformation Switzerland had its full share of suppression and insurrection, in the midst of which the few language differences which existed were forgotten. There was fanaticism on both sides, but rarely has that quality achieved so perfect an expression as in the mouth of a Spanish ambassador during the Thirty Years War, who remarked: "You should know that an African or Indian who is Catholic is more closely related to you and should receive more favor at your hands than a Swiss fellow-countryman who is a heretic."[6]

Finally, the emergence of language difficulties on a considerable scale was rendered impossible in Switzerland by the weakness of the central government, a condition that continued until 1848. Barring the period of French intervention (1798–1815), each canton possessed the widest attributes of self-government, among them complete language autonomy. In territories so diminutive one language prevailed as a rule, divergent minorities being too weak to present problems of any consequence. Moreover, tolerance was generally practiced, especially since an intense particularism, devoted to local customs and hostile to all centralization, was the order of the day. Occasionally protests were made because the laws of a given canton were printed in one language only. Even in such cases the motive was not to oppress or inconvenience the minority but solely a matter of Swiss economy. In the end it was decided as a rule to spend a little more money to hire translators and publish laws and official notices in the second language, with the proviso, however, that the original text should be considered the official one.[7]

---

[4] With equal care Louis XI saw to it that Germans from Austria or the Empire were not admitted to the Swiss regiments of mercenaries. Cf. H. Weilenmann, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[5] "Havans ordineiz et ordinons que dicy orenavant ly enfant grant ou pity ne fatzent la vellye de la Saint-Johant ne autre jour partye en disant Alaman contre Roman," quoted p. 34, R. Henry, *La Suisse et la question des langues* (Bern: Stämpfli, 1906).

[6] Quoted by H. Weilenmann, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

A considerable degree of centralization came at last in 1848, not, however, without civil war, and was further extended in 1874. The new federal government set up in the former year was erected upon a broad democratic basis, to which the revision of the latter year added the initiative and referendum. With both centralization and democracy Switzerland was fully equipped to experience language difficulties, so familiar elsewhere. So far as local tongues were concerned, however, the cantons were left as free as before, thus removing one possibility of trouble. Several of them, indeed, liberalized their constitutions under the influence of federal example.[8] Any danger of national antagonism was removed by the bold and far-sighted statesmanship of the Swiss founding-fathers of 1847. In the constitutional convention of that year there was no conflict on the matter of language; all that remained to be done was to find a formula expressing the prevailing view, which was successfully accomplished after discussing two or three versions by the brief statement of Article 109 as follows: "The three principal languages of Switzerland, the German, French, and Italian, are national languages of the federation."[9] In the words of Dr. Weilenmann this provision symbolized the fact that

---

[7] Thus the constitution of Valais adopted in 1844 recognized both German and French as official cantonal languages. The constitution of Bern, 1831, recognized both languages but provided that the German text should be regarded as the original. In Freiburg a constitution of the same year recognized French as the language of the government but provided for publication of all laws of general application in German.

[8] Among them were Freiburg, 1857; Graubünden, 1880; and Bern, 1893. Graubünden's action was particularly interesting since it guaranteed the recognition of three cantonal languages—German, Italian, and Rhaeto-Romanic.

> the former Romance subjects and allies had finally been made equal in every respect to the Germans of the older cantons. . . . . At one stroke the last memorial of the old time German confederation collapsed; without preparation, almost astoundingly the democratic idea prevailed that a three-language people must form a three-language state in which no nationality shall be considered more than the others.[10]

Since 1848, Article 109 of the Swiss constitution has been followed both in spirit and in letter to the minutest detail. Italian and French versions of laws and decrees, and especially all the decisions of federal officials, have been given precisely the same juristic value as the German version. Even Rhaeto-Romanic is used when occasion demands. In the chambers and before federal authorities the three national languages are used interchangeably. Moreover, in elections or appointments to the Federal Council and other national administrative or judicial bodies extreme care is taken to maintain as even-handed a balance between the three language elements as possible. In this sense a sort of proportional representation was voluntarily worked out between the German, French, and Italian populations of the country long before the electoral system of the same name, based upon mathematical quotas of voters, was applied to elections for the National Council in 1919. Sometimes, indeed, the criticism is whispered that too many offices are being conferred upon aspirants from the German section of the country. On the other hand, it is asserted that, as a matter of principle, every care is taken to see that French and Italians are given a slightly higher percentage of appointments than that to which their proportion of the total population entitles them. That essential fairness characterized the distribution is altogether likely. Otherwise the Swiss, who are keen to criticize, would certainly have manifested their dissatisfaction. By such unusual but perfectly simple political magic as the foregoing, language antagonisms have been avoided; and, as one writer somewhat lyrically expresses it, "not only the speech of the federation but its brain and its soul as well have become three-tongued."[11]

Much of the credit for an outcome so favorable must be ascribed to the effective language instruction given in the public schools, a matter which is discussed at some length elsewhere.[12] Thanks to it, a very large percentage of the population is bilingual, and among the more highly educated classes, trilingual. As a result of the exceptionally good teaching in this field, coupled with certain other favoring factors, it is literally true that a German Swiss traveling in the Romance section of the country does not think of the French spoken there as a foreign language, and vice versa. To him it is simply a "second national language" *(zweite Landessprache)*, to use the phrase employed both in the federal constitution and in the curricula of the schools he has attended. Thus he escapes the feeling of annoyance often growing into hatred with which, for example, a Frenchman traveling beyond the Rhine listens to German.

---

[9] In the revision of 1874 it became Article 116.

[10] *Op. cit.*, pp. 217, 218.

[11] H. Weilenmann, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

[12] See chap. vii.

Inasmuch as the Swiss have succeeded in avoiding all serious domestic trouble over the language question, it may be reckoned a positive advantage that they speak three tongues, each of which is used by one of their great neighbors. If they possessed a language peculiar to themselves, they would be shut off from many of the contacts they now have with Germany, France, and Italy. As it is, the Swiss of the Teutonic cantons communicate readily with Germans of the Reich and follow developments in the latter with close attention. Similarly, the Swiss of Ticino and of the western cantons keep themselves surprisingly well informed with regard to what is going on in Italy and France, respectively. In all three cases, of course, the diminutive size of the country and its central location with reference to three such powerful neighbors would compel the Swiss to observe the activities of the latter with the closest interest. But the point of importance here is that they are enabled to do so all the more thoroughly because of their mastery of the languages spoken beyond the frontiers.

It is frequently said of the Swiss that they are thoroughgoing local citizens and at the same time excellent citizens of the world.[13] Between the two, of course, they are no mean citizens of their federal state, which, however, is of much more recent origin than the twenty-five cantonal fatherlands. Undoubtedly the capacity of the Swiss for world-citizenship is greatly enhanced by the fact that they speak at home languages which are spoken much more extensively abroad.

Of course, world-citizenship carries with it disadvantages as well as advantages. For centuries the Swiss have emigrated in large numbers, most of them going, of course, until the overseas movement began about 1840, into neighboring countries speaking the language which they used at home. Also, many of them returned bringing with them foreign attachments and sympathies. Similarly, it is easier for Germans, Italians, and French to immigrate to those sections of Switzerland in which their mother-tongue is spoken. Quite apart from movements of population back and forth across the boundaries, however, the active commercial and intellectual intercourse of the Swiss, facilitated by community of language, with their neighbors of Germany, France, and Italy, opens the way to foreign influence, particularly to that *geistige Überfremdung* of which complaint is so frequently made in the Teutonic cantons.

---

[13] On this point, cf. W. Schäfer, *op. cit.,* p. 107.

Against the menace of "intellectual foreignization" facilitated by the three language bridges leading abroad, a system of barriers has been developed little less effective in the aggregate than the means employed to solve the domestic language problem. In all the schools of the country teachers lay stress on the distinction between mere cultural affinities and essential political loyalties, a lesson which is repeated *ad infinitum* by political leaders, by patriotic societies, and by most of the poets and romancers of the country.

It is a curious fact, also, that the Teutonic dialects spoken in eastern and central Switzerland, to which the people are attached in an unusual degree, serve to mark them off from the Germans of the Reich. As Paul Seippel, himself of Romance origin, magnificently apostrophizes one of them, the peculiar local speech of Zürich:

> That is our protecting wall. . . . . It is a language that betrays power and energy. The *r*'s ring like the rolling of drums. One feels that this language has the smell of the soil. It fits into the hardness and roughness of the German Swiss landscape. It reminds one of the rushing noise of a mountain brook, of the tempestuous south wind roaring through the pine woods, of the bellowing bull of Uri, of battle turmoil from which resounded the Schwyzer warcry: *"Harus."* Our fellow-confederates hold fast to it as to their most precious good because they feel deeply that it is the inviolable dike protecting them against inundation from the north.[14]

It cannot be too much emphasized that the Swiss are not ashamed of their dialects; rather, they take pride in them. A magnificent scholarly memorial is being erected to preserve them, the *Schweizerische Idiotikon*, perhaps the most extensive dialect dictionary in the world, of which eight large volumes, complete to the letter *T*, have already been issued.

In Western Switzerland dialects have long since died out, but the inhabitants, who speak a very correct French, belong for the most part to the reformed church, and regard themselves as a people apart from the Catholic, and at the same time Godless, Frenchmen of France. Nor are Catholic Swiss, whether they speak French or German, in the least desirous of giving up the large measure of autonomy they enjoy in Switzerland for the anti-clerical policy of their great neighbor to the west.

---

[14] *Schweizerische Wahrheiten*, p. 14. While the dialect specifically referred to above is that of Zürich, any of the others spoken in Eastern Switzerland is equally distinctive as contrasted with German of the Reich.

In short, the Swiss decided once for all to form a state by themselves, the German-speaking element with the French and the Italian and so on around the trinity, and after more than a century of life together they are as firmly resolved as ever to stick to that decision. Possibly the Teutonic section could stand alone for the time being if the French and Italians decided to desert, but Switzerland is small enough as it is and a two-thirds fragment would infallibly gravitate to the Reich in the long run. The French and Italian Swiss are under no illusions on this score; if they seceded, it would be France and Italy for them without a doubt. And with rare exceptions they have no desire at all for the rôle of mere provinces—provinces distant from the capital at that—in a highly centralized state system. Educated Italian- or French-speaking Swiss citizens who maintain active intellectual relations with Rome or Paris nevertheless assert with evident sincerity that they simply cannot conceive themselves as citizens of Italy or France.

Whether a Swiss speaks German, French, or Italian, he is apt to think that he has nothing to gain and much to lose by union with the greater nation speaking his language. At home he is subject to no disability because of it. Nor is there the slightest interference with any cultural relations he may wish to maintain with Berlin, Paris, or Rome. On the other hand, union with France or Italy would destroy at one stroke the wide measure of local autonomy which his canton enjoys. Even under the federal system of Germany the measure of states' rights left to it would be comparatively small. In none of the three cases would it receive anything remotely equivalent to the right of equal representation in the Council of States which each canton now possesses, or to the equal cantonal vote on amendments guaranteed by Article 123 of the federal constitution.

Loyalty to country is, however, a matter which goes deeper than any hedonic calculus of advantages and disadvantages political. Instinctively the Swiss feel that as parts of three larger states they would be swallowed up and utterly lost. Under the present government they know that their separate languages and dialects, equal by law, tolerated and encouraged everywhere, are quite safe. What more could union with Germany, France, or Italy offer in this respect? They regard their languages as important, of course, but nevertheless as part only of Swiss local life and character. In addition they are devoted to the peculiar literature which has been produced in each section of the country, to innumerable local cults, traditions, and observances, all of which would be jeopardized by political union with Germany, France, or Italy. The Swiss are fond of likening their country to a rambling old châlet with twenty-two rooms, all strikingly peculiar but all under the same broad and sheltering roof. At heart, what they wish above all else is to live their own lives together, protecting and encouraging each other's idiosyncracies of every sort. Hence it is that likeness of the tongues spoken or of cultural interests pursued beyond the boundaries exerts no great pull upon the domestic circle snug and content within the *Schweizerhaus*.

It is a noteworthy fact that party lines in Switzerland have not been broken by the River Saane which marks off the Welsch from the Deutsch section of the country. The nearest approach to such a division is the decided tendency of Western Switzerland to take a states' rights view of political issues. Yet this tendency is not so strong as that of the German-speaking central cantons where the motive is religious and not linguistic.

When the federal initiative and referendum were introduced in 1874, grave forebodings were expressed that the German population, with its more than two-thirds majority, might habitually use these devices to vote down the French minority. While much less common today, fears on this score for the "intellectual and moral security" of Romance Switzerland still find utterance from time to time.[15] They remind one of the apprehensions expressed that, once given the vote, women would combine against the men in a party of their own designed to push sex antagonism *à outrance*. Certainly, the Swiss have not decided initiative and referendum issues on a language basis. Of course, centralization has made some progress during the eight decades that have elapsed since 1848, at a much less rapid rate, however, than in other federal systems, notably our own. In Switzerland, as elsewhere, the motive power behind this movement was essentially economic rather than a desire on the part of the German-speaking element to dominate. So far as the federal referendum in particular is concerned, it has been used again and again to destroy hopeful projects for centralization, the people showing themselves much less willing to take steps in this direction than their chosen representatives at Bern. Even where affirmative action results, it has been demonstrated repeatedly that the German Swiss are willing to take into account the public opinion of the Romance section. It was the latter section in particular which desired that treaties should be made subject to referendum and that Switzerland should enter the League of Nations, both of which were carried, although with a larger majority in the west than in the east. Even in minor matters such as the initiative on foreign orders now pending (1930), many German-speaking citizens take into account the sensibilities of their Welsh fellow-citizens before they cast their votes.

---

[15] As, for example, in M. de Rameru, *Entre la France et nous, essai sur la minorité romande en Suisse* (Paris: Budry, 1928). The thesis advanced by M. Rameru was thought important enough to be discussed in three closely argued editorials which appeared in the *Journal de Genève,* July 5, 10, 18, 1928.

Statistically as well as politically the language balance has been maintained with remarkable steadiness in Switzerland. Table VIII shows the number and percentage of each of the principal groups at various periods from 1880 to 1920.

TABLE VIII

POPULATION OF SWITZERLAND ACCORDING TO MOTHER-TONGUE*

MOTHER-TONGUE	1880		1910		1920	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
German	2,030,792	71.3	2,594,186	69.0	2,750,622	70.9
French	608,007	21.4	793,264	21.2	824,320	21.2
Italian	161,923	5.7	302,578	8.1	238,544	6.2
Rhaeto-romanic	38,705	1.4	40,234	1.1	42.940	1.1
Others	6,675	0.2	23,031	0.6	23,894	0.6
Total	2,846,102	100.0	3,753,293	100.0	3,880,320	100.0

* Figures from the *Statistisches Jahrbuch, 1928,* p. 30. Prior to 1880, communes and households rather than individuals were enumerated as to mother-tongue.

It will be observed that the only considerable variation occurring during the forty years covered by Table VIII was the growth in the number speaking Italian as their mother-tongue, reaching a maximum of 8.1 per cent in 1910. This particular development was due to the large immigration of laborers from the South. During the World War Switzerland lost a considerable part of its foreign population, as men were called to the colors of their respective countries. In the case of the Italians the result was that their percentage for 1920 is only slightly in excess of that for 1880. Apart from this one irregularity, every language group shows an absolute increase at each period recorded in the foregoing table, while the percentages shown for each at the end of the forty years vary in no case more than one-half of 1 per cent from those of 1880.

In the face of apparently so complete a solution of the language problem in Switzerland one hesitates to discuss the gulf which threatened to open up between Deutsch and Welsch in 1914. It is obvious that the Swiss somewhat overrated their solidarity prior to that date. On the other hand, it seems clear from an outside point of view that, with the customary political caution, not to say timorousness, of a small nation, they grossly overrated the magnitude of the danger, just as we, with far less justification, at the same time suddenly lost our jaunty confidence in the great American melting-pot. The menace of the situation did not lie in the fact of internal antagonism per se. There is always plenty of the latter in Switzerland; indeed, at times each of the twenty-two cantons seems bent on pulling in a different direction. Or again, four or five groups of cantons may be formed in pursuit of certain common ends, dissolving and recombining with kaleidoscopic rapidity. No one is alarmed over such differences, considering them normal features of a federal system. What the Swiss regarded as particularly menacing in 1914 was the sudden division of the country on the line of the Saane into two sharply defined sections, each sympathizing largely with its greater neighbor and language brother in the World War, each sharply criticizing the other as dangerously pro-French or pro-German.

After two-thirds of a century, during which the whole language question had seemed settled to the satisfaction of everyone, the Swiss may well have been dazed at this sudden proof to the contrary. In the ensuing babble of argument, mingled with no little recrimination, protagonists of the Romance section had decidedly the better of it. Whether due to language affinity or not, at least they were standing where one would expect all Swiss to stand normally, namely, on the side of the more democratic powers in the great conflict. Moreover, they were able to point out the fate of Belgium as certain to befall their own country should Germany decide to use it as a highway. It is a poor excuse; but undoubtedly the German Swiss in particular, accustomed as they had been for generations to active intellectual intercourse with Germans beyond the Rhine, were greatly bedevilled by floods of propaganda suddenly poured in upon them from the war presses of the Empire. It was a time when, as Spitteler sharply reminded them, "the thousands and thousands of intellectual currents from Germany, which, day by day, like a beneficent River Nile fruitfully inundate our valleys, need filtration to make them palatable."

While language differences are usually pointed out as lying at the basis of Swiss misunderstandings from 1914 to 1918, it would be an incomplete picture, indeed, which failed to present other contributory elements. Between the eastern and western sections there are differences of blood, of tradition and history, of religious views, of economic interests, and, derived from all these, very marked divergences of social psychology. Inheritors of Calvin on the one side of the Saane and of Zwingli on the other are Protestants both, to be sure, but not the same kind of Protestants by any means. In the veins of the west Swiss there still pulses much of the ferment of the French revolution, despite the assertion often heard there that they alone interpreted Rousseau aright—his "back to nature" meaning, according to them, "cultivate the soil." On the other hand, the German Swiss are outspoken realists, slow of speech, haters of all posing, steady workers at the most tedious tasks each in his own sphere, lovers of order and discipline, and hence almost too respectful of the powers that be.[16]

Between peoples of such diverse antecedents and temperaments misunderstandings are certain to arise from time to time, and doubtless would arise even if they spoke the same tongue. It is equally true, however, as both sections freely admit in quieter times, that the qualities of the more energetic and imaginative western Swiss form an admirable complement to those of the more stolid and realistic eastern Swiss, and that in combination the two are intellectually and morally, as well as politically, far richer than they would be separated. It is a marriage not without occasional jars but happier and more prosperous in the long run because of them.

After all, however, the threatened breach of 1914 was the one exception that proves the rule of Swiss unity. While it is no doubt true that a perfectly prepared citizenship would have stood the shock of war at the country's gates without seeming to waver in its loyalty to the fatherland, on the other hand the rapidity with which mutual understanding and co-operation were restored between the sections indicates the essential solidarity of the Swiss people. At the time of greatest tension it was commonly said and believed that, were it necessary to declare war, the country would have responded as one man. Mobilization was accomplished with astonishing smoothness and rapidity, and for four long years the resultant heavy burden of guarding the frontiers was borne with surprisingly little complaint.[17] Incidentally, troops from German Switzerland were received with the most enthusiastic hospitality in the Romance sections and vice versa. Years after the conclusion of the war one hears on every hand the happiest recollections of the friendships thus formed, of the resultant new and more perfect understanding of Italian, French, and German Swiss for each other.

---

[16] No one has analyzed the characteristics of the two peoples more keenly, and at the same time more sympathetically, than Paul Seippel, himself of Genevese origin but for many years a resident of Zürich, in a war-time pamphlet dedicated to national understanding, entitled *Schweizerische Wahrheiten* (Zürich: Rascher, 1917).

[17] A flood of light is thrown upon the mobilization of the Swiss army and the attitude of the civilian population during the World War in chapters iii and v of J. Ruchti, *Geschichte der Schweiz während des Weltkrieges* (Bern: Haupt, 1928). I. Band.

Meanwhile, every effort was being made by public officials, by patriotic societies, by literary men and the press, by teachers and ministers of the gospel to bridge the gulf that threatened to open between Deutsch and Welsch. One gets the impression that it was chiefly the half-baked intellectuals, among them certain pastors and priests, who were most vociferous in the expression of foreign sympathies. Never did the solid mass of peasants, artisans, and small business men forget that they were Swiss. On the other hand, the true intellectual leaders of the country did yeoman service in the restoration of national solidarity.[18] Thanks largely to the latter, the tide had begun to turn toward understanding and unity before the end of 1914. Afterward there were minor incidents, the worst being the affair of the colonels in 1916 and the Hoffman affair of the year following, which disturbed harmony momentarily.[19] Before the end of the war language differences were largely forgotten owing to the menace of class antagonisms which culminated in the general strike immediately following the armistice.

The upshot of the whole matter was that, regardless of language and other differences, the Swiss did succeed in maintaining their time-honored principle of neutrality from 1914 to 1918. They did it in spite of the fact that with Italy's entrance into the conflict their country became a little enclave of peace, completely surrounded by warring great neighbors. One may judge neutrality during a world-conflict variously, but there can be no doubt of the spirit of unity, of resolution, and of sacrifice necessary to preserve it under such circumstances. A decade after the war the mutual confidence and understanding of German, French, and Italian Swiss is as complete as ever before, perhaps even more complete because of the severe testing it received from 1914 to 1918. Still may they say in Schiller's words, which better than any other express the spirit of their unity, whether or not that unity be considered national in character:

---

[18] A large pamphlet literature by writers of distinction helped materially to restore the country's equilibrium, e.g., W. E. Rappard, *Zur nationalen Verständigung und Einigkeit;* P. Seippel, *Schweizerische Wahrheiten* (published by Rascher of Zürich in 1915 and 1917, respectively); and *Wir Schweizer, Unsere Neutralität und der Krieg* (by the same publisher, 1915), a collection of papers by thirty-seven leaders of Swiss thought, politics, and business. The war-time speeches of members of the Swiss Federal Council were also distributed widely under the title *Kriegzeit-Reden Schweizerischer Bundesräte* (Zürich: Füssli, 1915).

[19] Cf. J. Ruchti, *op. cit.,* chap. vi.

Wir wollen sein ein einig Volk von Brüdern,
In keiner Not uns trennen und Gefahr.

LITERATURE

In literature, as in language, Switzerland is not a unit, separate and self-contained, but three fragments, each a part of a larger culture extending far beyond the territorial limits of the country. Nevertheless, these fragments are far from being of negligible importance considered either by themselves or as divisions of a larger whole. On the contrary, there have been periods when impulses of Helvetic origin have modified profoundly the main current of the literary stream in neighboring great states. At one time during the eighteenth century, for example, Bodmer and Breitinger of Zürich led the dominant movement in German literature. Scarcely less notable was the influence upon French thought exerted somewhat later by the Genevese Rousseau, "who so fully and magnificently expressed the genius of the Swiss."[20] Considering the literary output of the country separately, it is quite true, as a recent commentator observes, that "no German and no French province in the living generation has created or is creating so much of national culture in word, color, and form as Switzerland."[21]

Undoubedly the threefold division of Swiss literature, each with an intellectual capital outside the country, is a potential threat to national unity. The difficulty, however, is met and to a large degree overcome by the sharp distinction made between cultural affinities and political loyalties. Even in the upper grades of the common school, but still more forcefully in the middle school, teachers are accustomed to impress this distinction upon the minds of their pupils. And, as we shall see, the greatest of contemporary Swiss authors have insisted upon it with all the force at their command.

As a matter of mere literature it is, moreover, easy to indicate certain striking differences between the work of Swiss authors and that of their confrères in Germany, France, and Italy. The former is marked off from German writing especially by the large output in the many peculiar Teutonic dialects current in the nothern and eastern cantons.

---

[20] M. G. de Reynold, "La littérature suisse et la bilinguisme," in *Comœdia,* February 1, 1928.

[21] H. Lumpert, *op. cit.,* p. 47.

It is marked off from the literatures of all three of the great neighboring states by the tendency, markedly stronger among Swiss authors than among those of any merely provincial coterie, to reflect local customs and traditions—"to exhale the odor of the natal soil" as one of their own favorite phrases has it. Because of this peculiar trait, it was inevitable that the mountain background of the country should come to form the distinctive background also of much of its prose and poetry. And finally, to a much greater degree than the writers of Germany, France and Italy, those of Switzerland tend to take up a definite attitude toward the state and all things political.

Of course, being Swiss and concerned for the most part with Swiss life, the literary men of that country could not be true to themselves nor faithfully portray their countrymen without depicting the characteristic interest of the latter in affairs of government. As a result of this particular trait the influence of literature upon public life is probably more direct and powerful in Switzerland than in any other country. Undoubtedly its contribution to civic education is greater, being magnified by the large share of attention given to the works of national authors in schools of all grades.

Histories of Swiss literature make it clear that the greater poets and novelists of the country have been subjected to the play of opposing forces partly centrifugal, partly centripetal.[22] On the one hand, there is the pull to figure on the larger national stage of Germany, France, or Italy, or, in the case of the most gifted, to contribute to universal literature. That way lie greater difficulties, but in case of success greater fame and, of course, larger royalties. Judging from the number of Swiss writers who take up their residence abroad, the literary attraction of France is relatively stronger than that of Germany, perhaps because of the centralization of the intellectual life of the former in Paris.

On the other hand, all Swiss writers, great and small alike, are powerfully drawn to portray the local life about them. The number of minor authors is legion who devote themselves to dialect writing or to the depiction of peasant and village conditions in a single canton or section of the country. Outside of distinction in a rather narrowly circumscribed locality these forms of literary activity offer slight rewards in the way of fame and still less in the way of money, although sometimes, indeed, a regional novel, such as J. C. Heer's *König der Bernina,* happens to strike the fancy of the reading public in the German Reich and develops a success resembling that of an American "best-seller." Regardless of infinitesimally small returns in cash and credit, however, the output of Swiss local literature continues unabated; in other words, of the two forces referred to above the centripetal is stronger than the centrifugal. In this connection it is particularly noteworthy that not only minor writers but authors of greater distinction, capable of commanding a wide reading public outside the country (for example, Edouard Rod or Carl Spitteler) nevertheless devote no inconsiderable part of their time to the portrayal of the local Swiss scene.

---

[22] The most important work dealing with the history of German Swiss literature is J. Bächtold, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur in der Schweiz* (1892), which, however, carries the subject only to the death of Bodmer in 1783. There are two excellent treatises on the history of French Swiss literature: P. Godet, *Histoire littéraire de la Suisse française* (1890); and V. Rossel, *Histoire littéraire de la Suisse romande* (new ed., illus., 1903). In collaboration with Ernst Jenny the latter writer produced a two-volume work dealing with the history of literature in both language sections under the title *Geschichte der schweizerischen Literatur* (Bern: Francke, 1910).

Of all literary fields, that of Swiss dialect story and verse is certainly the narrowest. Under the influence of Gottfried Keller and C. F. Meyer it was somewhat neglected during the second half of the nineteenth century, but it has more than come into its own since. Some evidence of the thoroughness with which this field is cultivated in German Switzerland is afforded by the following brief list of the more-noted recent writers according to the particular districts represented: A. Frey, Aargau; J. Breitenstein and M. Plüss, Basel (Stadt and Land, respectively); R. v. Tavel, R. Ischer-Bringold, and O. v. Greyerz, Bern; M. Lienert, Einsiedeln; C. A. Loosli and S. Gfellers, Emmental; C. Streiff, Glarus; J. Roos and O. Nägeli, Luzern. Solothurn achieves particular distinction in dialect works, being represented by B. Wyss, J. Schild, and J. Hofstätter, forerunners of J. Reinhardt, who ranks among the greatest masters of the art.[23] So far is it pushed that one or two authors have even attempted historical novels recreating archaic forms of local speech. Obviously, works of the foregoing character appeal to a very limited circle of readers, but the force of the appeal is enormously strengthened by the homely medium employed. Of one such book of unusual merit a noted critic remarked that it confirmed the belief of the people in itself. Doubtlessly, many of them deserve the same meed of praise; but the people who see themselves portrayed therein are, after all, not the Swiss nation as a whole but the peculiar folk of some one little corner of the country.

Without the use of dialect the number of Swiss writers who find a background for their works within the limits of a single district or canton is also surprisingly large. Thus the scene of one of C. F. Meyer's great historical novels, *Jürg Jenatsch,* is located in Graubünden. More recently J. A. v. Sprecher, Sylvia Andrea, T. Truog-Saluz, and J. C. Heer have cultivated the same field, the last-named with a degree of popular success out of all proportion to the merits of his work. Of exceptional value are the portrayals of life in Valais, Ticino, and Glarus by J. Jegerlehner, E. Zahn, and E. Wyler, respectively.

---

[23] A collection of dialect literature from all parts of German Switzerland may be found in O. Sutermeister, *Schwyzerdütsch.*

Owing to the dying-out of local dialects, French Switzerland offers no opportunity for their use as a literary medium, but, on the other hand, it is unusually prolific of regional novels, dramas, and poetry. For example, the romances of Edouard Rod, the scenes of most of which are located in Canton Vaud, are masterpieces of detailed characterization which have enjoyed wide popularity both in France and in Romance Switzerland. In prose and verse Neuchâtel has been celebrated by a galaxy of recent writers, among them T. Combe, P. Godet, Borel-Girard, C. Neuhaus, J. de Pury, M. Calame; Valais, by L. Courthion, J. Gross, and Burnat-Provins; Vaud, by A. Cérésole; and the Bernese Jura, by V. Rossell.

Life rather than politics is the major theme of most of the regional writers named above, but politics is so universal an ingredient of Swiss life that it seldom escapes at least casual mention. At times one finds the quantity of the ingredients reversed, as in J. P. Porret's romance *L'échelle,* which is remarkable for the severe castigation administered to radical agitators. Moreover, certain of the regions and writers represented in this group are intensely Catholic, a fact usually apparent in their productions and one not likely to be overlooked by critics and compilers of textbooks whose literary judgment is deflected somewhat by theological bias. According to M. Gonzague de Reynold, a literary reawakening is taking place among the Catholics of Switzerland led by the influential review *Nova et Vetera,* whereas Protestant inspiration seems to have been exhausted.[24]

Closely related to works of the foregoing character, often indeed combined with them, are the innumerable books dealing with peasant life or the mountain environment in which Swiss writers not unnaturally achieve unusual distinction. Jeremias Gotthelf (1797–1854), who led in the former field by his clear-cut pictures of rural life in the Emmental during the first half of the nineteenth century, still enjoys unrivaled popularity throughout German Switzerland. True to the national character, Gotthelf was deeply interested and active in the

---

[24] *Comœdia,* February 1, 1928.

Bernese politics of his day. As a rural clergyman he had learned the need which he preached incessantly both from pulpit and desk of better schools and moderate reforms generally; but on the other hand, he fought every manifestation of what he called "sloppy radicalism" with blind fury. Since Gotthelf's day there have been many portrayers of Swiss peasant life in village, field, and mountain pasture. Among contemporary writers of this character F. Moeschlin, for German, and C. F. Ramuz and R. Morax, for Romance Switzerland, have attained distinction, the last-named in the form of highly original dramas presented at his own little theater in the heart of the Vaudois Jura.

The first literary hymn by a Swiss writer in praise of the mountain background of the country was *Die Alpen* (1729), by A. v. Haller. More than a century later C. F. Meyer glorified the high Alpine world of glaciers, crags, and snowy summits, finding in it his essential fatherland. In that respect he contrasts sharply with his great contemporary, Gottfried Keller, whose Switzerland at bottom was not the physical country but the Swiss people themselves—their history, their institutions, their daily life, their self-reliant democratic spirit. After Meyer's death, the Alpine motif was less emphasized until 1893, when Ernst Zahn's *Kämpfe* gave it new vigor by developing, as Segantini was doing in his matchless pictures, the deep and intimate fusion of mountain environment and mountain folk. Besides Zahn the Alpine theme has been taken up anew and admirably handled by a number of distinguished contemporary writers, among them M. Lienert, J. Bosshart, F. Odermatt, and J. Jegerlehner.

Swiss critics protest frequently and vehemently against what they consider the continual overworking of dialect, regional, peasant, and mountain themes; as one of them forcibly but somewhat inelegantly puts it: "*Es roch allmählich immer stärker nach Kuhstall in unserer Dichtung.*" They were exasperated beyond measure when Heinrich Federer deliberately translated this atmosphere to the courts of high heaven in a "proud-modest" war-time defense of Swiss neutrality.[25] Younger writers are exhorted to attempt a broader field of operations and to develop a more sweeping philosophy than are to be found within the narrow confines of a single mountain valley. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the odor of the cow stall is a characteristic one in Switzerland. While somewhat rank at times, it is none the less reminiscent of nourishment for the day and fertility for the morrow and certainly is nothing to be ashamed of or to be sprinkled with perfumery. Moreover, the variety of Swiss local life is so great that mastery of it even in one small canton is no inconsiderable achievement. Writers in the United States are said to cherish the ambition to produce "the great American novel"—certainly not an inconceivable achievement considering the increasing uniformity of our national life. Among the Swiss the thing is never talked about, for the simple reason that it is unthinkable. In the absence of even the ambition to write the great Swiss novel they may console themselves with the excellence of innumerable *genre* sketches, each illuminating brightly and sympathetically the local stage.

---

[25] *Unser Herrgott und der Schweizer* (2d ed.; Zürich: Rascher, 1916).

At the risk of numerous tedious lists and some repetition, it has been thought necessary to deal with the foregoing characteristics, purely literary as they are, of Swiss writing. While works in dialect or dealing with specific regions, with peasant life and mountain environment, seldom contain a large admixture of political matter, they are, nevertheless, profoundly potent indirectly in forming the psychological background of civil life. All of them lay emphasis upon the spirit of locality, giving it new distinctness of outline and vividness of color in the minds of a people already familiarized with it by the contacts of everyday life, immeasurably deepening their affection for the narrower cantonal as contrasted with the broader federal homeland, and hence strengthening their essentially states' rights habit of thought. The situation has, of course, two sides. From the point of view of a believer in centralization, there is little in it to cause rejoicing. Even in literary works which reveal a broader political viewpoint, as for example Eugen Wyler's *Stausee*, there is a distinct tendency—inherent, of course, in the actualities of Swiss life—to lead up to and base the federal idea upon cantonal experiences and loyalty. Adherents of the states' rights doctrine so widely reflected in Swiss literature are not unaware, however, of the possibility of its ludicrous exaggeration into that petty, self-seeking spirit which is often satirized politically as the *Kantönligeist*.

Lest too great emphasis be laid upon the localizing influence of Swiss literature, it should be remarked that much work is being done in broader fields. Many of the novelists and story-tellers already mentioned by no means confine themselves to dialect or regional works; in addition, the following contemporary or recent romancers enjoy great popularity: K. A. Bernouilli; J. Bosshart, R. de Traz, H. Federer, A. Huggenberger, P. Ilg, H. Kurz, F. Marti, J. Schaffner, A. Steffen, A. Vögtlin, R. Waldstetter, R. Walser, M. Waser, and L. Wenger. Second in number only to the romancers are the lyrical poets: A. Frey, I. Kaiser, H. Leuthold, and F. Schmid of the older generation, and, more recently, K. Bänninger, E. Ermatinger, R. Faesi, M. Geilinger, H. Hiltbrunner, S. Lang, E. Marti, M. Pulver, and K. Stamm. Criticism is represented by P. Godet, P. Seippel, G. Vallette, and a host of lesser writers, and feuilletonists. Historical writing has always been greatly appreciated in Switzerland. J. Burckhardt's masterly studies of the Renaissance are read everywhere; and among more recent writers in the field of national history whose works enjoy more than local fame may be mentioned W. Oechsli, J. Dierauer, K. Dändliker, E. Gagliardi, K. Meyer, E. Fueter, Th. Curti, C. Borgeaud, and W. Martin.

In the drama, on the other hand, no Swiss has achieved the highest distinction. J. V. Widmann, who is considered one of the greatest of their recent poets, wrote several plays characterized by finished form and subtle thought but lacking in power. At the present time rather remarkable results are being achieved in the popular open-air theater, the leading writer in this field, A. Ott, succeeding where Widman failed and failing where he succeeded. At no point does Swiss literature differ so sharply from that of America and England as in its almost complete neglect of biography. Our public in particular, which is incurably addicted to hero worship and the cult of leadership, devours works of this character as insatiably as best-selling romances, caring little, it would seem, whether they are good or bad, perhaps, indeed, preferring the latter if they provide sufficient sensational detail and profess to psychoanalyze their unfortunate subjects. Carrying the idea of democracy to the extreme of suspecting and opposing powerful personalities, and having had no heroes since Nicholas von der Flue, the Swiss, on the other hand, have lost all desire apparently to read about minor figures of later date in the form of biography.

In spite of the relative neglect of drama and biography, the literary output of Switzerland as a whole, especially considering the small population of the country, is nothing short of prodigious. Statistics show that some nineteen hundred works are published annually, and in addition extraordinarily large numbers of pamphlets on every conceivable subject are constantly being printed and distributed.[26] Bookstores abound in the cities and do a thriving business. According to a recent estimate the annual importation of books, which has declined somewhat from before-the-war figures, still runs to eight and a half million volumes, the larger number coming of course from Germany and France.[27] Switzerland exports from two and one-half to three million volumes each year, a rather unfavorable balance of trade from the economic point of view, whatever one may think of it as an intellectual phenomenon. In large part the disproportion is due, no doubt, to the greater publishing facilities of such cities as Paris, Berlin, and Leipsic, but it also reflects something of the rather provincial attitude of the Swiss to their greater neighbors. The latter is often made the subject of complaint at home, and allegations are rather common to the effect that a local author is not properly appreciated until he has been approved by foreign critics and readers. On the other hand, books so localized as many of those produced in Switzerland can hope for slight if any sale outside its borders. Nevertheless, as a rule the German, French, and Italian reading publics are decidedly slow in recognizing Swiss talent of high ability and general appeal.

---

[26] *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz, 1928,* p. 285.

[27] Figures from Otto Wettstein, *Die Schweiz* (2d ed.; 1925), p. 141.

A critic of note has recently called attention anew to the fact that the poets of German Switzerland are much more concerned with the state than are singers beyond the Rhine.[28] In the sublime empyrean of the latter, vulgar political fact may be ignored. The Swiss poet, on the other hand, nearly always possesses a point of view regarding the state, not necessarily favorable, to be sure, but certain to be clearly displayed even if neutral or opposed. Of all the literary men the country has produced, Gottfried Keller (1819–90) was certainly the most politically minded.[29] In a sense it is true of him as Spitteler said, that he was "first a citizen, then a poet"; nevertheless, the greatness of his literary genius is beyond question. Spitteler's remark needs to be taken with a grain of salt, however, coming as it does from a man who was first a poet, then a citizen. Yet by the irony of fate Spitteler was compelled on one occasion to intervene in national politics more directly than any poet in the history of the country. As a young man, Keller wrote and fought—the latter rather ineffectively—for the radical party Jeremias Gotthelf so much despised. Later he held for fifteen years (1861–76) the appointive office of Clerk of State in the government of his beloved canton, Zürich, during part of the time being also a member by popular election of its legislative Grand Council. It was Keller's good fortune to see his political ideals realized almost completely in 1848; and in *Das Fähnlein der Sieben Aufrechten* he painted an altogether charming but certainly too roseate picture of Switzerland during the ensuing few years, the Switzerland of his dreams come true, a utopia in miniature, to be sure, but none the less a utopia well-nigh perfect in all its parts. It was the poet's bad fortune to witness the blurring of that picture during the next few decades by the encroachments of what he considered dangerous forms of democracy. Against them he fought with all his matchless literary art, yet with good humor, after the fashion of Martin Salander, one of his characters, in whose mouth he puts the words: "I will fight wrong-headedness as long as I am able; if it wins, well and good, I will adapt myself to it gracefully."

---

[28] M. Bächtold, "Die jüngeren Schweizerdichter und ihr Verhältnis zum Staat," in *Der Staatsbürger,* 9. Jhrg., Nr. 4, 5 (February 16, March 1, 1925); S. 26, 34.

[29] To this aspect of Keller's life an admirable monograph has been devoted by H. M. Kriesi, *Gottfried Keller als Politiker* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1918).

At bottom no doubt Keller's readiness to submit to triumphant "wrongheadedness" was made easier by the strong conviction which he held throughout life in the essential rightness of popular instincts. It was not politics which makes men bad, he maintained, but men who make politics bad. In spite of an exact sense of realities and a constant fund of playful humor, Keller was essentially a damn-all-neutrals sort of a person. Replying to his friend Hegi, who saw only the interest of individuals and narrow groups in the intense political struggle of 1845, the poet held it to be emphatically a matter of "yes or no, true or false, right or wrong, white or black," concluding with an eloquent expression of his belief that the high principles at stake in controversies over matters of state purify the actors and transactions involved.[30]

Keller's *Frau Regula Amrain und ihr Jüngster* is essentially the story of the education of a son by a wise and devoted mother, not the least part of the said education being in morals and civics. As a classic it is widely read in Swiss schools, and certainly it contributes quite as much to the political as to the literary instruction of students. In his collection of stories entitled *Die Leute von Seldwyla*, the people of a Swiss small town are done to the life, not without a certain roguish malice. Of Keller's longer works the latest, *Martin Salander*, is most rich in political content; through the hero the author reveals himself as he was in his inmost essence, a guardian spirit forever "anxious, teaching, preaching, warning, scolding, punishing in a fatherly way" his beloved Switzerland.[31] Many of his shorter pieces are also of high political value: the Prayer Day addresses, for example, which he wrote as Clerk of State,[32] and particularly a short sketch entitled Election Day *(Der Wahltag)*, lecturing civic slackers, which might well be translated for use in American get-out-the-vote campaigns.

Keller is unquestionably the greatest of the national poets of German Switzerland, not without honor beyond the Rhine as well; but in

[30] Kriesi, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[31] Max Zollinger, in *Zeitschrift für Deutschkunde*, p. 457, No. 6, 1927.

[32] See chap. xii.

his works virtually nothing is said of the French or Italian sections of the country. In Catholic cantons he is less admired because of his religious and political free-thinking, always openly avowed. Certain attacks which he made, particularly upon the Jesuits, also rankle; and indeed it must be admitted that for full, precise, and blistering malediction they have never been excelled, not even by medieval bulls of excommunication. All things considered, however, Keller came closer to the expression of the spirit of Switzerland as a whole than any other of its nineteenth-century literary lights. In the magnificent national hymn which he wrote, *An das Vaterland,* one hears the veritable voice of the country, particularly when, as on almost every festival occasion, it is sung, standing, by the masses of a Swiss audience.

Since Keller's death no Swiss writer has approached him in fervent patriotism. Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825–98), his greatest contemporary, regarded the state at its worst as a necessary evil, the collective concept of might and power. At their best, both State and Church seemed to him essential, but not institutions of the highest type, each being nothing more than an administrator of the supreme spiritual forces materialized in man's nature. As between Keller and Meyer, the tendency of subsequent Swiss writers of note seems to be to prefer the political philosophy of the latter, a tendency which has been increasingly apparent since the World War. For example, Moeschlin's hero comes to the conclusion in the drama, *Revolution des Herzens,* never to raise a rifle against a human being; and Stamm's soldier, standing before the crucified one, breaks down at the conviction that he has killed senselessly. Jacob Bosshart maintains that "the state is a contrivance to which one must not sacrifice himself"; further, "it is nonsense to assert that the welfare of the state is the highest good." "First, ripe men—individuals who have reached a high and conscious responsibility to themselves and to the whole." In his *A Voice in the Wilderness (Ein Rufer in der Wüste),* Bosshart's hero paints a tragic picture of contemporary Switzerland, its terrible social antagonisms, men facing each other like beasts of prey ready to spring, greed for power and possession glaring from the eyes both of "have's" and of "have-nots," employers ready to wield the whip over workmen, laborers bound as slaves to the machine, muttering the words "organization," "class-struggle," "wage-scale," "strike," "solidarity," "working time," "bourgeois," "capitalism," "revolution." With all due allowance for the gross exaggeration of the foregoing, it is obvious that the Swiss have come a long ways from Gottfried Keller and the idyllic scenes portrayed in *Das Fähnlein der Sieben Aufrechten.*

Not that pessimism and despair, hostility toward the state, and glorification of the individual are the only notes struck in recent Swiss literature. On the contrary, there is a good deal of self-satisfaction, some of it rather smug, in many poems and novels, particularly those dealing with peasant and local life. Peculiar peoples are wont to admire their own peculiarities even if the latter are unknown beyond the confines of a single valley. Nor is there lacking some cautious expression of the natural feeling which all Swiss cherish at bottom, whether they admit it or not, namely, that they are a nation which has been particularly favored in the past and is destined, perchance, to make contributions of value to the development of the whole human race. Writers like Adolf Frey (1855–90), for example, who did much work in collaboration with Gottfried Keller, have continued the glowing patriotic tradition of the latter. Among younger writers also there are those like Eugen Wyler who, without overemphasis of its virtues, admire their country and believe profoundly in its future. In his two fascinating romances, *Eidgenossen* and *Stausee,* he has shown unusual powers of description and combination, the ability to grasp both the industrial and the peasant point of view, the latter particularly as manifested by the mountain folk of Glarus, to see political evils sharply without forgetting the hopeful traits of national life, to evaluate both the most conservative and the most radical doctrines which are being promulgated in the country, and finally to give expression to the deep underlying faith of the whole Swiss people in the principle of democracy.

Since the beginning of the present century Carl Spitteler (1845–1924) has been the outstanding figure in Swiss literature; to many, indeed, he ranks as the greatest German poet since Goethe.[33] His three masterpieces, however—*Prometheus und Epimetheus*, *Der Olympische Frühling*, and *Prometheus der Dulder*—transcend national limitations, both Swiss and German. Projected on a cosmic scale, they draw their characters, or rather the names their characters bear, from the ancient Greek world of myth and fable. All of them glorify the superman, a being conceived and expounded by Spitteler in epic greatness before the nervous Nietzsche developed him in philosophic form. As to the political views of the poet, he maintains in both the earliest and latest of his great works that it is a curse to be king because society and the state kill the soul and turn men into slaves. Later he was to assert that "the wisdom of world-history may be summed up in a single sentence: Each state steals as much as it can. *Punctum.* With pauses for digestion and fits of unconsciousness which are known as 'Peace.' . . . . The greater the genius of a statesman the more ruthless he is."

---

[33] Writing an *In Memoriam* of Spitteler addressed to the Swiss people, Romain Rolland said: "He is the greatest of you all. Never has your land—the honorable soil of sacred individuality and freedom—produced such a hero of art and thought. Permit a stranger (though so long your guest as to feel on his part that he is no longer a stranger, however you may feel on yours) to honor, now that he has joined the dead, Our Homer, the greatest German poet since Goethe, the only master of the epic since Milton died three centuries ago. But a more solitary figure amid the art of his day than either the one or the other of these."

In some shorter pieces and prose works Spitteler revealed his deep understanding of things Swiss. Critics pointed out also that the mountains, lakes, and forests in the midst of which his epic figures moved resembled the Alps rather more than Olympus and, further, that he accentuated his mastery of expression with certain words and turns of phrase peculiar to his own people. Apart from such casual indications, however, there was nothing to indicate the existence of a patriot heart in the poet's breast. Personally he lived from 1892 on virtually the life of a recluse, devoted wholly to his art. It is interesting to note also that he was early acclaimed beyond the Rhine, whereas at home recognition of his fame did not come until he had reached old age.

In short Carl Spitteler was apparently the last man one would expect to strike a blow for the welfare of his country. Yet in 1914 when Switzerland seemed threatened with an open breach between its German- and French-speaking sections, the poet emerged from his retirement, unwillingly, as he said, but determined nevertheless to fulfil his civic duty, and delivered an address on "Our Swiss Standpoint" before the Zürich group of the New Helvetic Society, December 14, 1914,[34] which did more to restore national unity than all the proclamations of the federal executive and all the speeches of the leading Swiss statesmen who had managed to keep their heads in the hour of crisis. In that fateful hour the Swiss singer of the superman showed that he was capable of a superhuman deed.

Limited as was the population of the nation to which Spitteler appealed, and unnoticed outside Switzerland as was his gesture amid the thronging events of the World War, it is doubtful if any political pamphlet ever written accomplished its purpose more completely than *Unser Schweizer Standpunkt*. For a parallel in our own history it is necessary to go back to Tom Paine's *Common Sense* during the Revolutionary War. Spitteler bases his argument upon the distinction between neighbors and brothers.

> All those who dwell on the other side of the national boundary line are our neighbors, and for the time being good neighbors; all who dwell on this side

---

[34] Reprinted as a pamphlet by Rascher of Zürich, *Unser Schweizer Standpunkt* had reached a circulation of 16,000 copies, a phenomenal figure for Switzerland, before the end of the war.

> are more than neighbors, namely our brothers. The difference between neighbor and brother, however, is an immense one. Even the best of neighbors may, given an occasion, fire upon us with cannon, whereas the brother fights upon our side in battle.

From this fundamental point—certainly a remarkable one in the mouth of a contemner of the state—Spitteler proceeds to call upon his fellow-citizens of German Switzerland to put their house in order. Not a word does he say in criticism of his fellow-citizens of Romance Switzerland, an attitude taken at that time by but few of the Swiss in the Teutonic section of the country. On the contrary, Spitteler held that to them could be left in full confidence the task of attending to their own affairs. Keeping straightforwardly to his own task, Spitteler tears the war propaganda which was being circulated at that time in German Switzerland to shreds and tatters. As it happened, of course, nearly all the materials thus so summarily disposed of came from beyond the Rhine. Neither did Spitteler refrain from speaking his mind about Belgium. He said,

> As such, Belgium is nothing to us Swiss; on the other hand, its fate is extraordinarily significant for us. That wrong was done Belgium was confessed originally by the doer with entire frankness. Later, in order to appear whiter in the eyes of the world, Cain blackened Abel. I hold the fishing for documents in the pockets of the still quivering victim an error of spiritual style. To strangle the sacrifice was fully enough. To add slander is too much. . . . . In exactly the same way petty testimonials of our alleged guilt will creep into the light if our own life should ever be attempted.

As against every calumny circulated as war propaganda, Spitteler insisted upon an attitude of exact truth and scrupulous fairness toward all neighbors of Switzerland so long as they remained good neighbors—France, England, Germany, Servia, Belgium, and Russia, alike—recounting in some detail the virtues of each, the friendly deeds performed by each on occasion toward Switzerland. For the Swiss themselves he proposed vigilance, the continued safe-guarding of all frontiers, true neutrality, a becoming modesty of demeanor.

> By the exceptional favor of fate we have been permitted to sit as spectators witnessing the frightful tragedy that now runs its course in Europe. Upon the stage grief prevails; behind the scene, murder. No matter where your heart listens, whether to the right or to the left, you hear misery sobbing, and the sobs of misery sound alike among all nations; in them there is no difference of language. Well, then, in the presence of this unreckoned mass of international suffering let us fill our hearts with silent pity, our souls with reverence, and above all let us take off our hats. . . . . Then we will be standing upon the truly neutral, the Swiss standpoint.

It may be true, as Spitteler generously observes, that the tide had begun to turn toward unity before the delivery of his Zürich address. Certainly it flowed much faster afterward. Among all the efforts made at the time and later by patriotic individuals and associations, however, the call of the lonely poet was clearly the most potent single factor. His civic duty performed "*ohne Wank und ohne Dank*," he returned to his retreat in Luzern to live anew among the epic heroes of his own creation. In Germany, where he had counted before the war so many of his friends and admirers, the Zürich address was followed by a howl of execration. Booksellers stripped their shelves of his volumes and threw them into the gutter. To the present day one may read in texts on German literature widely used in the schools of the Reich sentences such as the following: "Through his shameful attitude during the World War Carl Spitteler forfeited his claim to poetic appreciation on the part of every true German." On the other side of the ledger it is a pleasure to be able to record that before the poet's death in 1924 he received the Nobel Prize for literature—the only Swiss writer who has been so honored. The distinction thus conferred upon him is but one of many evidences that some measure of the man's greatness, as massive, exalted and awe-inspiring as one of the snowpeaks of the higher Alpine world, has begun to dawn in Switzerland and throughout Europe.

A recent criticism published in a widely read New York journal of the first of Spitteler's longer works to be translated into English,[35] remarks that "surely the Swiss are the least literary people in Europe. They are more apt to express themselves in cheese, chocolate, and hotels than in literature." It would be hard to make a grosser misstatement of fact than that contained in the first of the foregoing sentences, nor is the error relieved by the rather commonplace flippancy tacked on to it. Remembering the long lists of authors in various fields referred to above, it is altogether probable that Switzerland possesses more writers of distinction for each ten thousand of her population—to use a statistical phrase—than any other country in the world. It is sometimes alleged against the Swiss that they have produced no philosophers, and they themselves are ready to admit a certain lack of interest in purely theoretical speculation. On the other hand, they have shown abundant resource in making practical applications of philosophy to life, as shown, for example, by the work of Pestalozzi, who also, by the way, resorted to the form of the romance to propagate his educational theories. But it cannot be alleged against the Swiss that they

[35] *Laughing Truths* (translated by J. F. Muirhead; New York: Putnams, 1928).

have produced no poets. On the contrary, they have not only produced their full quota of poets but—which is perhaps even more remarkable—they are accustomed to treat the poets they have produced with sincere deference.[36]

It is particularly noteworthy in this connection that many Swiss authors have begun their careers as teachers, leaving the schoolroom only when mounting royalties set them free to devote their time wholly to writing. Whether with or without a pedagogical past, the tendency is strong among them to develop a pedagogical attitude in their literary work, frequently lecturing the people outright, as did Gottfried Keller, on moral, political, and social themes; or at least holding up before their fellow-citizens, with only partly concealed intent to instruct, higher ideals of personal and community life. Nor is there any doubt that much of this teaching, direct or indirect, is effective in influencing conduct. It may be observed that a people which is accustomed to listen to its poets is quite as likely to receive higher guidance as one which listens to its philosophers, if, indeed, any nation ever did the latter. Certainly it is considered more dangerous to listen to poets than to listen to philosophers.

There are many evidences of the respect and esteem with which the Swiss regard their literary men of light and leading. In their country, strangely enough, a poet is generally considered not a mere amusing jingler, probably unbalanced and certainly of no practical account, but rather a creative artist whose work is worthy of appreciation quite as much as the work of the painter, composer, or architect. The latter viewpoint is continually cropping up, not only in the printed page but in the conversation of intelligent Swiss circles. It is not at all uncommon, for example, to hear Francesco Chiesa, the Ticinese poet, referred to as the greatest cultural force in that canton; and when recently the Doctor's degree *honoris causa* was conferred upon him by the University of Rome and almost at the same time he received the Grand Prize of the Swiss Schiller Foundation, felicitations were extended to him by virtually the entire press of the country. For example, on this happy double occasion the *Journal de Genève* remarked that "Italy honors in Francesco Chiesa one of the most human of its poets and prose writers, one of the most convinced and most worthy representatives of its culture and literary tradition. Switzerland crowns that one of its sons who was able to express with a perfection never attained before him, one of the lands and peoples which compose its harmonious trinity." In private life Chiesa is a teacher who had celebrated his pedagogical jubilee amid the acclaim of the Ticinese people shortly before the events above referred to. His principal works are *Preludio*, *Calliope*, *I viali d'oro*, *Fuochi di primavera*, and *Consolazioni* in poetry, and *Istorie e favole*, *Racconti puerili*, and *Tempo di Marzo* in prose.

---

[36] In German Switzerland, as in Germany, the word *Dichter* ("poet") is used to denote any creative writer whether or not he uses verse form.

As further evidence of the respect in which poets are held by the Swiss may be mentioned the action taken by their government on two occasions. Unable as a democracy to confer orders or titles, it nevertheless managed to confer transcendent distinctions upon Gottfried Keller and Carl Spitteler. When the former reached his seventieth birthday, which was marked by expressions of gratitude and affection throughout the nation, the Federal Council presented him an address emphasizing particularly his brilliant services to the fatherland. It read in part,

> Well may we point out that these [Keller's] compositions, however high their peaks may lift themselves into the realms of phantasy, are rooted deep in the soil of the homeland, and precisely for that reason are of the greatest value to our people. But also the moral kernel, the definite purpose to contribute to the education both of youth and of the people as a whole, which, without prejudice to their poetic beauty, many of these works contain, makes of them sources from which not only the living but also later generations of our people may draw the best and soundest impulses.

Similarly, when Carl Spitteler celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday in 1920, the Federal Council presented him with an address, assuring the gray but unbroken poet: "Never will we forget that you entered the lists for the ideals of your fatherland with the gifts of your spirit and your heart, and stood for unity among our citizens." Republics may be ungrateful as the proverb asserts, but the Swiss Republic has shown itself not without gratitude for its two greatest poets.

Not only are poets respected in Switzerland; they are read as well, and exhaustively at that. In another place attention has been called to the large amount of time spent in the schools on the study of the mother-tongue and its literature, and in the higher grades to one or more of the other national languages and literatures.[37] Thanks to this instruction, and especially to the excellence of readers and other textbooks, it is safe to say that even those children who are able to spend only the minimum of time required by law in education nevertheless receive a fairly adequate introduction to the works of the greater writers of the country. Even after the completion of school the habit of reading is persisted in by a large proportion of the people, although, according to some moralists, there is entirely too large a consumption in Switzerland of cheap sensational novels imported from Germany and France. Figures quoted above with regard to the number of foreign and domestic books bought and sold annually seem to support their contention.

---

[37] See chap. vii.

The prevalence of the reading habit among large masses of the people is further shown by the number and excellence of the public libraries of the country. Nor is the habit of recent origin; the abbey library of St. Gallen, still one of the most famous in the world for its collection of rare old manuscripts and books, contained over four hundred volumes as early as A.D. 860; the monastic libraries of Einsiedeln and Engelberg are also of medieval origin—the library of the University of Basel dates from the fifteenth century; while the city libraries of Bern, Zürich, Geneva, Schaffhausen, and Winterthur were established during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. In the course of the nineteenth century several excellent cantonal collections were begun, and toward its end the number of public libraries increased more rapidly than ever before. In 1868 there were 2,090 Swiss libraries, with a total of 2,500,000 volumes; in 1911, 5,798, with nearly 9,500,000 volumes, subsequently increased to a figure considerably in excess of 10,000,000. The federal government has established a national library specially devoted to collections in the field of Swiss literature. Local libraries devote particular attention to the circulation of books throughout neighboring rural districts. Many of the greater city libraries have recently been housed in splendid buildings, the largest single collections being as follows: Central Library, Zürich, 650,000 volumes; University Library, Basel, 560,000 volumes; Public Library, Geneva, 400,000 volumes; Swiss National Library and City Library both of Bern, 360,000 and 270,000 volumes, respectively; cantonal libraries in Lausanne and Freiburg, 300,000 and 225,000 volumes, respectively.[38]

In addition to libraries, reading circles abound in every nook and corner of the country. Still another means of contact between author and public, fairly common throughout Europe but developed to a slighter degree in the United States, is provided by the newspaper *feuilleton* which is to be found at the bottom of the first few pages at least of nearly every daily or weekly journal in Switzerland. In reading sketches of the lives of Swiss writers of distinction, one notes that a very large percentage of them have been obliged to eke out scanty royalties, especially during their earlier years, by contributing in this way essays, criticisms, shorter articles, and stories, often of high excellence, to the newspapers of the country. Carl Spitteler did so, to quote the most illustrious single example, until a windfall in the form of an inheritance enabled him to devote the remainder of his life to the composition of epic poems.

---

[38] Figures from O. Wettstein, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

Considering that the Switzerland of 1848, which was two-thirds agricultural, had been transformed by 1900 into a country two-thirds industrial, it is evident that the continued predominance of peasant and regional writing represents a certain literary lag. On the other hand, younger authors are giving vigorous expression, particularly since the war, to every form of radical doctrine. Swiss literature is thus becoming as varied as Swiss party life. And thanks to the excellent instruction given in the schools, the reading habits of the people, the admiration which they feel for their favorite authors, the high merits of the latter, and their profound absorption in the public welfare it seems certain that the prepotent influence of literature upon politics is destined to continue indefinitely in Switzerland.

BALLADS

Poems in spirited style celebrating heroic exploits form so large a part of the literary output of Switzerland that they demand special attention. While not all of Swiss history has been written in ballads, probably a greater part of it has been so recorded than in any other country. Of course, much that is important in the daily life of a people escapes mention in narrative verse. Quiet plodding behind the plow, steady labor in the workshop, sober discussion in the folk meetings of canton and commune, have little to offer as themes for poets in the heroic style. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the history of Switzerland for centuries was warlike to an extreme degree, abounding in sharp antagonisms, sudden reversals of alliances, face to face combat, and deeds of individual heroism.[39] These, of course, have been the darling themes of balladists in all ages and countries, and it is not strange that Swiss literature has been enriched to an unusual degree by their poetic labors.

The exceptional attractiveness of the ballad themes offered by Swiss history is best demonstrated by the large number of German writers who have found raw materials in this field. A recent collection published in Switzerland, especially for Swiss readers,[40] contains selections from Schiller, Uhland, Platen, Dahn, Schwab, Scheffel, Ling, Grün, Simrock, Bürger, Stolberg, and others. Within the country itself, interest in ballads is clearly increasing. All the greater names in recent Swiss literature have been deeply interested in this verse form, among them Gottfried Keller, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer, Adolf Frey, Carl Spitteler, and Meinrad Lienert. During the last few decades also, there has been a marked increase in the number of ballads composed in various local dialects. While the tendency of Swiss ballads as a whole is to stimulate national sentiment by glorifying the deeds of the *Eidgenossen,* on the other hand the dialect pieces and also the compositions based on local myths contribute to strengthen the cantonal spirit.

---

[39] The oldest Swiss historical folk song which has been preserved, dealing with the alliance between Bern and Freiburg, dates from the year 1243. All the subsequent ups and downs of Swiss military history are reflected in these compositions. *"Man höhnt, spottet, knirscht, reizt, jubelt, begeistert sich in kräftigen, ja masslosen Tönen."* Cf. Ernst Jenny and Virgile Rossel, *Geschichte der schweizerischen Literatur,* I, 42–52.

In the collection of Swiss ballads referred to above, heroic episodes in the history of the country from the time of the lake-dwellers to the World War are celebrated. All the great battles and many of lesser note—Sempach, St. Jakob an der Birs, Grandson, Morat, Fontana, Novara, Kappell, and the massacre at Stans—are represented by one and sometimes by two or three ballads. There can be no doubt that the wide reading of such stirring narratives—and they are widely read, not only in collections devoted wholly to ballads but also separately in schoolbooks—contributes powerfully to patriotic sentiment. Filled as they are with watch fires burning on mountain tops, with the clangor of the tocsin, with trumpet calls to battle, and the ring of steel on steel, they contribute with equal power to martial sentiment. In the latter respect ballads with their ancient and inveterately heroic point of view are patently out of touch with the peaceful attitude which the country has maintained, the Sonderbund war excepted, for more than a century. Only in some few of the more recent compositions, as in Robert Faesi's "Abgesang," is an invocation to peace to be found. Undoubtedly, balladists will ever be incorrigibly militaristic; on the other hand, it is significant that the latest Swiss collection in this field was issued in 1918, not with the purpose of encouraging the people to participate in the war, but rather to encourage them in the steadfast maintenance of the neutral position taken four years earlier. As one contemporary poet nobly phrased it:

Völker, wir wollen euch Leidgenossen,
Dir, Heimat, Eidgenossen sein!

---

[40] Ernst Eschman, *100 Balladen und Historische Gedichte aus der Schweizergeschichte* (Zürich: Füssli, 1918).

Einsam umdroht, gemeinsam entschlossen,
Freund zwischen Feinden stehn wir allein,
Harren: Wann sprengst du auf blendenden Rossen,
Göttlicher Friede, als Sieger herein?[41]

THE PRESS

In proportion to population Switzerland has more newspapers than any other country in the world. Figures collected in 1910 show that it actually possessed one newspaper for every 9,908 of the population. The journalistic "density" of other countries at the same date was as follows:

Germany	one paper for each 15,474 inhabitants*
England	one paper for each 18,700 inhabitants
United States	one paper for each 45,986 inhabitants
Italy	one paper for each 56,950 inhabitants
Spain	one paper for each 62,913 inhabitants
France	one paper for each 66,000 inhabitants

* The figure for Germany is for the year 1913. Cf. Dr. K. Weber, "Vom schweizerischen Zeitungswesen i. J. 1848," *Politischer Rundschau*, 6. Jhrg., Heft. 3 (March, 1927), S. 97.

Of course, the foregoing figures do not tell the whole story. They take no account of the fundamentally important item of circulation, nor of the size of newspapers, the character and value of their contents. Certainly so far as average circulation is concerned, Switzerland would rank well toward the bottom of the foregoing list. On the other hand the country supports an extraordinarily large number of newspapers, although most of them, to be sure, are purely local in character. For this continued vogue of a small-town press the extreme decentralization of Swiss life is largely responsible—decentralization, be it remembered, not only of political institutions but of natural environment, of occupation, of language, race, religion, and custom as well.

In the recent history of Switzerland there is a clearly perceptible relationship between the development of democracy and the development of a popular press, each acting both as cause and effect upon the other. At the end of the reactionary period 1815–30, there was still not a single daily paper in the country. The sweeping liberal movement which followed led to the establishment of partisan organs in every corner of the country. To them, of course, the conservatives could reply only by starting papers of their own. By 1848 there were already 88 papers in the country, one to every 27,315 inhabitants. While primarily cantonal organs, a few of the more important of these were attracting wide circles of readers throughout their own language district if not throughout the country as a whole. With the establishment of the federal constitution in 1848 the need for a journal of national scope became plainly apparent, the first definite attempt to meet it being made by the *Bund* of Bern, established in 1850. There are now some half-dozen Swiss papers which are read sufficiently widely to qualify in this class. Nevertheless, it remains true that none of them has eclipsed the local press of its district to anything like the same extent as do the large city newspapers in the United States.

---

[41] Robert Faesi, *Abgesang,* p. 207 of the Eschmann collection.

Moreover, the political press of Switzerland owes much of its development to the introduction of the initiative and referendum. These tools of direct democracy made considerable progress in the cantons between 1830 and 1848. In the latter year they found a place in the federal constitution as applied to constitutional amendments, and the revision of 1874 established the optional referendum for ordinary federal legislation. Meanwhile, they were being extended rapidly and put to frequent use in the various cantons. The federal initiative, however, was not made workable for partial revision until 1891. Something of the effect of these developments may be seen in the rapid multiplication of party papers, which increased in number from 88 in 1848 to 250 in 1880, and to 350 in 1900. As a result of the initiative and referendum, legislative organs in Switzerland, federal and cantonal, have taken on something of the character of advisory bodies, final decision in nearly all more important cases being given by the people. Upon the press falls the highly important duty of preparing and informing the electorate so that its legislative duties may be performed properly. Of course, Swiss party papers usually take a partisan view of legislative proposals submitted to popular vote. Cases are by no means unknown, however, in which the pro's and con's of pending measures are fully stated, and citizens are urged to form their own opinions. In any event, there are so many newspapers of varying party shades that no voter need find it difficult to discover arguments on both sides of any initiative or referendum measure. As on the continent generally, Swiss cafes, restaurants, hotels, and clubrooms are kept well supplied with current issues of journals and periodicals. For these reasons, no doubt, the American device of publicity pamphlets has not been introduced into Switzerland.

According to a survey made by the *Staatsbürger* in 1920, there were in that year some 1,000 Swiss newspapers and periodicals of all descriptions. Of these, 550 appeared in the German language. As the German-speaking population amounts to 69 per cent of the total, it follows that Romance Switzerland has relatively a much larger number of papers to its credit. Among the thousand periodicals referred to above nearly every variety current elsewhere is to be found—not only political, but literary, scientific, educational, religious, economic, and trade journals and the like, many of them of such high character that they deserve a much larger circulation abroad than they enjoy. There seems, however, to be no pornographic output, no magazines of nudity posing as physical culture such as are to be found on the newsstands of neighboring nations. One or two Swiss comic magazines are known abroad as well as at home. They are "hard-boiled" and plain-spoken to an extreme degree, never more so than when dealing with political personalities and events. In a few of the larger cities also there are small sheets of no great circulation which devote themselves to the garbage pails of local scandal. Swiss papers of the better sort devote very little space to news of crime, although an occasional *cause célèbre* may be followed in detail. There is, however, no sob-sister stuff, nor any sensational featuring of underworld heroes—in short, nothing that could minister to criminal vanity. Minor or commonplace offenses are rarely mentioned, although sometimes one finds brief summaries of police-court cases using the initials instead of the names of culprits. Of sport news also there is very little according to American standards, chiefly the bare statement of events and records with virtually no lionizing of individual athletes. An exception must be noted in the case of the great gymnastic and marksmanship competitions, which, as national events, are presented fully by all the larger papers of the country.

A recent critic of the American press remarks, somewhat acridly:

> The newspaper reader perceives in the freedom of the press the privilege to invade his personal privacy, print his picture without his consent, dump onto his doorstep filth collected from the courts, and ballyhoo, for the aggrandizement of its own treasury, prize-fighters, channel swimmers, football players, chorus girls and aviators. He cannot see that the freedom of the press is utilized to any extent in the defense of unpopular views; in the excoriation of industrial abuses; in the free criticism of elected officials; in the aggressive exposure of Teapot Dome scandals.[42]

It would be impossible to indict the Swiss press on either of the foregoing counts. On the contrary, radical papers continually defend unpopular views and excoriate industrial abuses. Given the opportunity of Teapot Dome scandals, there can be no doubt that the press of all parties would expose them aggressively. Indeed, the criticism of public officials is constantly carried to an extent, not only in newspapers but in private conversation as well, which seems exaggerated to the outside observer. With all his virtues, the Swiss citizen is a valiant protester and complainer, ever ready to take his pen in hand and write to Mr. Editor. And editors themselves are occasionally accused of dealing out unmerited criticism for the purpose of increasing circulation. As targets for attacks of the preceding character, public officials often have a rather unhappy time of it. No doubt, much of their habitual caution is due to the knowledge that any deviation from the straight and narrow path is certain to be followed by a flood of criticism in the public press. Particularly is this true in the conduct of foreign affairs, which Swiss citizens observe with unremitting and anxious attention.[43] The almost complete absence of corruption or extravagance in the Alpine republic is also to be explained partly by the fact that any case of either sort would be detected and exposed instantly.

---

[42] Silas Bent, *Ballyhoo*, p. 378.

Of the thousand Swiss periodicals of all sorts, 350 may be classified as primarily political in character, some 80 of these are "neutral," the remainder being partisan organs. "Neutral," in the Swiss sense of the term, should not be interpreted as equivalent to our American "independent." In fact, such sheets are advertising media to a very large degree, and hence devote little space to political events. They print a modicum of other news, somewhat emphasizing crime and sensational happenings, although not to anything like the degree of American yellow or tabloid papers. Their "intellectual value is in inverse ratio to the mass of paper on which they are printed,"[44] a mass great enough to make them externally rather impressive as Swiss papers go. Deriving their income in large part from advertising, they are sold at extremely low prices. As a result some neutral papers, usually known as *Anzeigers* in the German and as *Feuilles d'avis* in the French section of the country, have attained the, for Switzerland, tremendous circulation of from 40,000 to 60,000, or more than twice that of the most widely read political dailies. Swiss citizens interested in public affairs are wont to criticize papers of the *Anzeiger* type rather sharply, blaming them for abstention of voters from the polls, absorption of the people in material interests, and the like. These journalistic eunuchs are so deadly dull, however, so purely "neutral" in every respect except that one may find in them certain cheap kinds of advertising not carried in the other papers, that it seems far-fetched to blame them for political phenomena common in other democratic countries which have no papers of the sort. In any event, they are far less influential than our mushroom tabloids, with their pornographic rot, their political scandals, and their innumerable illustrations showing by a cross-mark where the body of the murdered man was found. Swiss newspapers generally, it may be noted, make very little use of illustrations, comic-strips, or cartoons of any sort.

---

[43] Paul Altheer, in his *Demokratie im Frack,* notes this fact in a humorous poem entitled "Foreign Politics" *("Aussenpolitik"),* one of the quatrains of which may be translated as follows:

> "And the man who steers the federal ship
> Must be always on the job perforce,
> For the voters watch lest by some slip
> He might swerve an inch from the appointed course."

[44] *Der Staatsbürger,* 4. Jhrg., Nr. 17 (September 1, 1920), S. 132.

Prior to the tremendous shift of votes as a result of the introduction of proportional representation for the election of the National Council in 1919, the primarily political newspapers of Switzerland (i.e., deducting the neutral press) were divided among the parties of the country roughly according to their relative strength. At present, however, the conservative parties enjoy an enormous advantage in this respect. According to figures presented in 1928 by *Die Presse*, the general organ of the publishing business in Switzerland, out of a total of 284 papers which it considered primarily political in character no fewer than 128 belonged to the Independent Democratic party. In addition there were 19 Democratic, 19 Liberal, and 17 generally middle-class sheets. The Peasants' party had 9, and the reactionary Catholic Conservative party, 72 papers. On the other hand, there were but 15 Socialist papers, of which twelve were dailies; and 3 affiliated with the Communist party. Since radical journals of the two latter categories are published in larger cities and read by the masses of the industrial population, it is probable that their circulation is considerably above the average.

Among the political newspapers of Switzerland a few are dailies with a national reputation, although, of course, they circulate principally within their own language section. Four of them may even be said to have international standing and are quoted freely outside the country, viz., the Independent Democratic *Bund* of Bern, and *Neue Zürcher Zeitung;* the Liberal Conservative *Journal de Genève*, and *Gazette de Lausanne*. Other papers of wide influence are the Independent Democratic *National-Zeitung* of Basel, the largest paper published in Switzerland, which in 1928 claimed a circulation of 34,000; the Democratic *Zürcher Post*, founded by Th. Curti; the *Vaterland* of Luzern, the central organ of the Catholic Conservatives in German Switzerland; the *Berner Tagwacht* and *Basler Vorwärts*, which are the official organs of the Social Democratic and Communist parties, respectively.

Up to the limit of their means the greater papers of the country may be depended upon for excellent brief accounts of current news and also for well-written critical editorials. Considering that the more successful of them have a circulation of between 20,000 and 30,000 only and enjoy no great advertising support, they are, of course unable to present many features common to the metropolitan press of neighboring countries. As a result, French dailies from Paris, Italian dailies from Milan, and German dailies from Munich, Frankfort, and even Berlin, have gained a considerable circulation in Switzerland, a fact which is often commented upon with regret. No Swiss who is interested in politics, however, can get along without one of the larger city papers published in Geneva, Bern, Basel, or Zürich. In it he finds briefly stated not only the principal international and foreign happenings of the day, to which he certainly gives much more attention than readers elsewhere, but also full reports of federal and local events, including somewhat detailed accounts of the proceedings in the national, cantonal, and municipal legislatures and in the conventions or diets of the party for which the paper stands. It is evident that the Swiss, like the English, follow such matters of news methodically and insist upon its day-by-day presentation in the political press. Articles of this sort are no doubt rather heavy, but they are of such importance that their exclusion as regular news items from American papers, with the single exception of reports of national conventions, presents a contrast decidedly unfavorable to our democracy. Swiss political editorials, moreover, are usually solid and closely reasoned; in these latter days particularly, they are seldom sprightly or waspish. All the larger city papers, particularly in Romance Switzerland, make a practice also of presenting numerous signed articles dealing with political, economic, literary, and scientific subjects, written by men of eminence in their respective fields. Frequently such articles are documented and footnoted with references to sources and collateral reading in a manner which suggests a scientific journal rather than a daily newspaper. Finally, as in continental Europe generally, there is to be found at the bottom of most pages the everlasting *feuilleton*, frequently a romance continued through several issues or a short story, but often an essay, an historical or critical article of real merit. On the whole, it is beyond question that Swiss editors aim at a considerable higher intellectual level among their readers than do their confrères in England, France, or the United

States; indeed, one wonders if much of what they print is not above the heads of the people.

In addition to papers of national or at least sectional character, all the populous cantons of Switzerland have one or more dailies supporting political parties with any considerable local following. Finally, there are numerous weeklies published in the towns and villages of the country, each with a small circulation but wielding a tremendous political influence in the aggregate. Not a few of the minor weeklies owe their origin to the enterprise of a country printer who, having made money in his trade, invested it in a paper with himself as editor. If 1,200 subscribers can be secured, such ventures are self-sustaining. For the handling of local or even cantonal affairs, always of the deepest interest to the average Swiss citizen, the resources of small weekly papers, aided by neighborhood acquaintance and native political shrewdness, are more than sufficient. Until recently, however, they were quite incapable of paying for a federal news service. The opportunity thus presented to designing politicians was much too tempting to be neglected. Accordingly a Central Press Association *(Schweizerische Mittelpresse)* was established with support presumably from gentlemen interested in the Independent Democratic party. In a short time the association was employing fifteen editors and reporters, who were kept busy sending out from Bern to local papers without charge, or at very low rates, news reports dealing with federal, international, and other topics. Outwardly, of course, such reports appeared to be neutral, but in reality they were said to contain much shrewd propaganda in the interest of the Independent Democratic party. Nevertheless, they were swallowed with avidity by unsuspecting country editors, much to the disgust of the national leaders of other political parties. In the end the Catholic Conservatives and Socialists were compelled to come to the aid of their own country editors by setting up similar central news agencies in Bern, although the latter are by no means so well supplied with funds and editorial assistants as is the Central Press Association. Thanks to these earnest, if not entirely sincere, efforts on their behalf, the rural press of Switzerland is kept uncommonly well informed as to doings at the federal capital; nor is any small-town editor now at a loss to procure such news dished up with the particular partisan sauce most favored by his own subscribers.

Radicals in Switzerland make the criticism, unavoidable with a privately owned press, that newspapers reflect the economic interests of their owners to the detriment at times of the public interest. It is also alleged that large advertisers insist upon the avoidance of any editorial expressions harmful to their business interests. The volume of paid matter is so small, however, both in the aggregate and in the average amount of space taken by each advertiser, that this factor is probably less potent than in other countries, where full-page advertisements are commonplace. There are also dark charges to the effect that too much of the stock of certain papers is owned abroad and that foreign influence is discoverable in their editorial columns.[45] If so, it must be adroitly concealed, for readers are very intolerant on this score. Of course, editorials are frankly partisan in party papers; nor are their news columns wholly free from coloring matter. Thus, conservative papers of the highest standing do not hesitate to interject sentences reprobating Soviet policies in their dispatches from Russia; and of course Socialists and Communists retort in kind. Sometimes parentheses are used to indicate the fact, but more often the reader is left to discover it for himself. With a reading public so critical and so impatient of leadership—a public, moreover, so much given to endless political discussion as the Swiss—it is probable that journalistic practices of the foregoing sort do comparatively slight harm.

Reflecting the general tolerance of Swiss political life, even the most avowedly partisan sheets, with a few discreditable exceptions, indulge but little in passionate utterance. In this respect there is a particularly sharp contrast between the press of France and that of Switzerland. One issue of the *Action française* contains more epithets than a whole year's journalistic output in all the cantons of the Alpine republic. To be sure, Swiss Communist and Socialist publications are more temperamental and resort frequently to heated invective, but even they are mild compared with organs of the same political faith in other European countries. It has not always been so in Switzerland. As late as the eighties of the last century that man was often considered the most effective editor who knew best how to excoriate his opponents thoroughly and unmercifully. Gems of journalistic acrimony dating from this lively epoch are dug up occasionally to be laughed at by the more sober generation of today. With the emergence of great social and economic problems which have now occupied Swiss political thought for several decades a more temperate and business-like tone has become characteristic of Swiss newspapers. And this change of tone has brought about, first, greater respect on the part of the people for the press; second, a greater degree of comity among the editors of the country. As an evidence of the latter development may be cited the formation several years ago of the Swiss Press Union, an organization embracing in its membership journalists of all parties and both confessions. The Swiss Press Union has been extremely active and effective in the advancement of the interests of the profession as a whole, and particularly in safeguarding the freedom of the press as against interests menacing it from time to time.

---

[45] For some rather acrid criticism on this point, cf. L. Ragaz, *Die Neue Schweiz* (Olten: Trösch, 1918), pp. 39 ff.; also a pamphlet by C. A. Loosli entitled *Ausländische Einflüsse in der Schweiz* (Zürich: Füssli, 1917).

It is a striking fact, perhaps not unrelated to the development just referred to, that a large proportion of the editorial writers of Switzerland have come from professorial chairs or the practice of law. According to a statistical report made in 1923, more than a third of the men entering newspaper work from other occupations had been teachers, while more than a fifth had been at the bar or in state service. Also, many journalists connected with radical papers have served an apprenticeship as secretarial workers in the employ of trade-unions. Editors are in an exceptionally favorable situation to form connections with leaders and with the rank and file of their parties, and hence are elected frequently to school boards, municipal councils, cantonal legislatures, and to the federal legislature. In 1926 four of the members of the Council of States and twenty-four national councilors were journalists, the representatives of that profession ranking second only to lawyers in the total membership of the two federal legislative bodies. It has been said that every able editor once seated in the Swiss parliament carries the marshal's baton of a federal councilor in his knapsack. At present, however, none of the seven members of the executive body is a newspaper man. Besides figuring largely in civil office, Swiss newspaper men do more than their full duty in military service. Of those who were of military age in 1923, a third held commissions and a fifth were non-commissioned officers.

The Swiss press of today, like the people it serves, is solid, systematic, educational. It is not brilliant or excessively enterprising, but neither is it meretricious or sensational. It deserves and receives the respect of the great body of readers. As a general rule the advice it gives is potent in elections and referendums; nevertheless, on occasion the public shows itself quite capable of voting contrary to editorial urgings. "In a small country like Switzerland," Bryce observes, "the people have a personal knowledge of their prominent figures which relegates the newspaper to a secondary place."[46] The observation is true particularly of local districts and the smaller cantons, where the fate of leaders depends far more on personal contacts and the political talk in which the Swiss so greatly delight than on anything printed in the newspapers. On the other hand, leaders in national affairs and in the larger cantons must depend to a great degree upon the press to reach the mass of their followers.

---

[46] *Modern Democracies,* II, 557.

As to the criticism that the newspapers of Switzerland are swayed by the influence of owners, advertisers, or the capitalist class generally, it is less common and bitter than charges of a similar character made against the press of neighboring countries, or in the United States, for that matter. More suspicious by nature, the average Swiss nevertheless believes a much larger part of what he sees in print than does the average American. Nor does the former err in so doing; there is comparatively little flim-flam even in the partisan papers he reads. With the decline and almost complete disappearance of slap-stick personal and partisan abuse from editorial columns, readers of combative instincts find them somewhat dull. Not so readers who are interested in the clash of ideas: a press which mirrors every day the combats of seven parties ranging from ultramontane to Communist in their programs; which deals with the proceedings of the League of Nations almost as a local institution; which, because of the central location of the country, must keep its columns open to the doings of every great power in Europe—to all such readers the press of Switzerland is no mean school of politics.

CHAPTER XII

SWISS SYMBOLISM—CEREMONIALS, MEMORIALS, FLAGS AND COATS-OF-ARMS, COSTUMES, HOLIDAYS

CEREMONIALS

In all attempts to describe the national character of the Swiss, emphasis is invariably laid upon their essential simplicity, calmness, and self-restraint, particularly upon their deep-seated aversion to display and magnificence. According to such writers, luxurious extravagance offends the highly developed economic sense of an extremely frugal people, while anything savoring of the pomp and circumstance of royalty is repugnant to their political instincts. The day is long since passed, however, when the French ambassador, coming to pay a diplomatic call upon the Swiss chief of state, encountered the wife of the latter engaged in washing the family clothes at the public fountain before the humble official residence. At present, of course, easy material conditions of life prevail among well-to-do city people generally. Nevertheless, the characteristics sketched above persist in large measure. They are strong enough to influence conduct, both private and public, so markedly that to foreigners coming from a metropolitan environment the Swiss often give the impression of extreme stolidity, drabness, and plainness.

It is not difficult to cite illustrations showing the strength of these national traits. Thus, in 1912, when Wilhelm II visited Zürich in full royal panoply, some worthy citizens so far forgot themselves as to receive him with a degree of enthusiasm hard to reconcile with the republican tradition of the country. The incident has not been allowed to rest, and those who bent the knee too servilely before His Imperial Highness have been lampooned unmercifully for it ever since. Unwonted private display falls under public condemnation in only slightly less degree. Several of the larger cities, particularly Zürich, Basel, Bern, and Geneva, count among their citizens numerous millionaires, at least of franc-millionaires,[1] but one would never suspect it owing to the unpretentiousness of their residences, equipages, and manner of life. Rich foreigners sojourning in Switzerland may devote themselves to luxurious living and conspicuous expenditure, but any Swiss who follows their example loses caste. Tourists easily find opportunities to gamble publicly at casinos and spas, the federal constitution to the contrary notwithstanding; but sober citizens with a reputation to lose shun the roulette table. It is altogether probable that the comparative moderateness of Socialist feeling, so far as it emanates from Swiss sources, is due in part to the simplicity and economy of the lives of the richer classes. There is almost none of the vulgar and provocative flaunting of wealth so common in the greater cities of Europe and America.

---

[1] According to statistics of the federal tax office published early in 1928, there were 389 millionaires in Zürich, 185 in Geneva, 178 in Basel, and 134 in Bern.

A population bent on simplicity and economy is not likely to develop ceremonials on a large scale. In general this is true of the Swiss. Nevertheless, the rituals of singing and musical societies, of gymnastic and rifle-shooting competitions, which are to be discussed later, are by no means lacking in impressiveness. Popular festivals are so numerous, so attractively presented, and draw such large crowds of visitors withal, that stern moralists of the old school protest vigorously against the *Festseuche* ("plague of festivals") that afflicts the country. Open-air plays are staged with scrupulous historical accuracy; but, with the exception of the Festival of the Vineyardists at Vevey, none of them can be accused of undue sumptuousness. In the Catholic cantons church ceremonials have all the impressiveness which is characteristic of that confession, heightened materially by the fervor of the peasant population; but here, also, the Swiss fall short of the processional magnificence of Flanders, Brittany, or Italy. In a few cities and rural districts there are seasonal celebrations and fairs of curious interest but of no particular elaborateness. Battle memorials and historical anniversaries are celebrated usually with much more of religious feeling than of pomp. At Bern official procedure is perhaps more plain and matter of fact than in any of the national capitals of the world.[2] National campaigns and elections partake of the same business-like character. Judges on the bench do not wear robes and wigs. Military uniforms, once gorgeous with reds and blues as the collections in historical museums sufficiently attest, have now taken on a neutral field-gray tint of low visibility. There is, however, one striking exception to the general drabness of Swiss political procedure, namely, the ritual of Landsgemeinden, which, as we will have occasion to note later, is ancient, colorful, and profoundly impressive.

---

[2] Each of the principal European countries has long maintained a protocol division in its foreign office specifically for the purpose of handling questions of ceremonial and precedence. Early in 1928 a similar division was created in our own Department of State. In Bern all such matters are looked after by one of the assistants of the chief of the Division of Foreign Affairs; but as he is charged with the performance of other duties, it cannot be said that Switzerland possesses a special *Direction du Protocole.*

Among religious festivals Easter, Ascension Day, and Whit-Sunday are peculiarly honored in Switzerland. In Italian-speaking Ticino and German-speaking Basel carnival week is devoted to mirth and freedom and even to rather gross and repulsive excesses which seem strangely out of keeping with the normal character of the people. There are also many local celebrations, such as the Fête of the Guardian Angel of the Wildkirchli on the Säntis, which is regarded by the Appenzellers as a jewel of old national tradition. On Easter Sunday the ancient Allemanic custom of the gathering-up of eggs *(Eierauflesen)* is still practiced in the German-speaking parts of the country.[3] Ascension Day is celebrated not only in its religious significance but also more literally by popular sunrise excursions to neighboring mountain summits. In certain rural sections of the canton of Zürich, well-to-do peasants combine philanthropy with business prudence by making presents of milk on Whit-Sunday to their poorer neighbors, the popular belief being that as a result of this observance their dairies will be blessed throughout the year. Whit-Sunday is also a favorite time for outings, although much the same may be said of any Sunday during the warmer months when weather conditions permit, a factor, by the way, which accounts for a considerable number of abstentions from voting in urban communities, usually to the disadvantage of the middle-class parties. Critics of an earlier period were accustomed to remark somewhat scornfully of the Swiss that, while always willing to accompany expeditions as porters or guides, they avoided going into the mountains otherwise except on purely utilitarian errands. Certainly this is no longer the case. It is true that wealthier persons who can afford it often visit coast resorts on the North Sea and in France, but nowadays the great masses of plain citizens pour into the higher mountain regions on foot and by train, automobile, bicycle, and every other form of conveyance, for Sunday outings and for their summer vacations. To so large an extent have Swiss of all classes come to visit and enjoy the matchless scenery of their country that the old prejudice which they once entertained against tourists has almost entirely disappeared.

Winter is winter in Switzerland—a season of hibernation for man and beast—to a much greater extent than in the lowlands of Europe.

---

[3] On this and other quaint customs and festivals in Switzerland, cf. Frederick Dossenbach, *How To See Switzerland,* pp. 247–55.

In consequence it is only natural that the coming of Spring should be celebrated, especially in the rural districts of the country, more joyously and boisterously than is customary elsewhere. Even city populations feel the urge to usher out somewhat demonstratively the season of snow and indoor-confinement—witness the camellia festival at Locarno, the narcissus festival at Montreux, the music and flower festival at Geneva, and particularly the "six o'clock ringing" *(Sechseläuten)* peculiar to Zürich.[4] This striking festival is held on the first Monday after the vernal equinox of each year, culminating, as the name implies, in the first ringing of the bells to end the day's work at six o'clock instead of at seven as during the winter. In the morning of *Sechseläuten* day the streets of the ancient city on the Limmat are gay with a procession of school children, many of whom wear the picturesque garb of the canton. They escort with every manifestation of joy and honor a triumphal float bearing the Goddess of Spring and her attendant maidens. Behind follows Böög, a gigantic and uncouth figure, emblematic of winter, made of lath swathed in cotton wool, which, in preparation for the fate soon to befall it, is abundantly stuffed with gunpowder and fire-crackers. Surrounding the Böög are swarms of dancing and jeering clowns who manifest in every way the hatred they feel for the symbol of winter. Thus the procession winds its way along the Limmat to the head of the placid lake, where Böög is raised upon a framework of poles with a plentiful underpinning of combustibles for the evening bonfire. This accomplished, the children troop to the townhall to participate in a ball given in honor of the event.

In the afternoon the guildsmen of the city parade with great dignity, wearing the ancient and colorful garb and bearing the flags and insignia of their organizations. As a matter of fact, these bodies ceased to be composed of artisans practicing their crafts in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In Zürich, as in Bern and other cities, however, the guilds have continued as social bodies, often retaining the fine old guildhouses as headquarters. Their present membership is recruited from all the various business and professional walks of life, although it is not uncommon for an applicant to seek admission to that one of them with which his ancestors were connected. While the original economic significance of these bodies has disappeared, their ceremonial significance has increased; and on all great civic occasions, such as the *Sechseläuten* of Zürich, they vie with each other in bringing to life again the bright liveries of other days.

---

[4] An excellent brief historical account of the *Sechseläuten* celebration is given by E. Meier-Leibstatt in *Der Staatsbürger,* 7. Jhrg., Nr. 1–2 (January 1, 1922), S. 12. According to this writer, it is a very ancient, pre-Christian festival which was taken over and greatly elaborated by the medieval guilds of the city. See, also, the vivid description of a contemporary *Sechseläuten* by Dr. Ernst Eschman, p. 117 of H. Brockmann-Jerosch, *Schweizer Volksleben* (Zürich: Rentsch, 1929).

With the pealing of all the bells of the city at six o'clock, the last scene in the drama of the day is enacted. In the presence of an immense crowd Böög is duly burned at the stake; and as he expiates his wrongdoings of the preceding winter in smoke and flames and ominous explosions, answering flares break out on the Utliberg, the Zürichberg, and other surrounding heights, while fireworks ascend from a flotilla of boats circling on the placid lake. The *Sechseläuten* is one of the few occasions on which the sober burgers of Zürich really give rein to the carnival spirit. It is by no means at an end when Böög is reduced to ashes, but with appropriate libations is continued well into the small hours of the next morning.

In the villages of the Upper Engadine the coming of Spring is welcomed by a picturesque custom known as *Chalandamarz*, the origin of which is said to go back to the days of the Roman occupation. Rising with the sun on the first of March, the older boys parade through the streets swinging heavy cowbells with all their might. Soon they are joined by the smaller urchins, each with a bell hanging from his neck. The latter are formed in single file, much as the cows and goats are ordered when marching on mountain paths. Dressed as a cowkeeper and carrying a scrupulously clean milk-pail on his shoulders, the tallest youngster places himself at the head of the merry procession. His older companions aid him in marshaling the juniors, and the line is closed by another tall boy, dressed as a herdsman, who carries a long stick and pretends to be looking anxiously about for strays. Thus the clangorous rout wends its way from house to house, singing an ancient Romansch song, and being regaled with generous gifts of sausages, pies, cakes, apples, and nuts. Dances and banquets follow in which the older generation have their part, and many a glass of good red Veltliner is drained in honor of the approaching spring.

In countless villages throughout the mountain regions of Switzerland the "Departure for the Alps" *(Alpaufzug)* is celebrated each spring as soon as the snows have melted sufficiently to permit the herds to start for the upland meadows. It is a festival for cattle quite as much as for men; indeed, the former reveal by their excitement and lowing that they are aware of the joyful change to come from the dark and narrow confinement of their winter stalls to the immense, sunlit meadows of lush grass high in the fastnesses of the mountains. And it is the cattle who attract the major share of attention on the day of the *Alp-*

aufzug. They are led by a powerful bull, garlanded with flowers and bearing on his flank a one-legged milking stool. Behind him come the cows, also decked with flowers and groomed for the occasion until their glossy coats shine in the sunlight. Herdsmen guide the procession, fondly eyeing and stroking the pets of their stables. Following them come vehicles of every description piled high with furniture and dairying utensils. No ceremonial is simpler, and none is more intimately connected with the pastoral life of the people, nor more tuneful with the tinkle of innumerable cowbells, the blowing of Alphorns, and the singing of herdsmen's melodies *(Kühreigen)*, accompanied by yodeling choruses.

In a sense, the Landsgemeinden, which meet yearly in one of the whole cantons (Glarus) and in four half-cantons (Upper and Lower Unterwalden, Appenzell-Exterior and Appenzell-Interior) are also spring festivals. They are held on the last Sunday in April or the first Sunday in May, and, if the weather is favorable, take on something of the aspect of a great popular picnic participated in not only by the men but also by the women and children of the countryside. Looking down upon the ring of voters from a hill hard by, the latter spend the day in games and social intercourse, which are no less animated than the political activities of the adult male element. While primarily legislative and constituent bodies, the Landsgemeinden also have a strongly marked religious character. Usually they are preceded by divine services in the principal church of the cantonal capital; they are opened by prayer and the singing of an anthem,[5] and closed by the taking of a solemn oath. In short, a Swiss Landsgemeinde has a threefold aspect: it is a spring festival, a religious congregation, and a democratic legislature rolled into one.

Emphasis upon the political and religious aspects of Landsgemeinden must not be permitted to obscure the fact that they are genuinely popular affairs and as such by no means devoid of a sense of humor. While regarded and conducted as decorously as the serious nature of the business transacted demands, nevertheless any untoward or comical incident—the falling-off backward from the upper tier of benches of a citizen who perhaps has had a drop too much, or the cracking of the voice of one of the criers unable to make himself heard in so large a crowd—is always properly relished. Bucolic orators sometimes rouse a gale of Homeric laughter, as a rule quite unintentionally. But the best evidence of a sense of humor in connection with Landsgemeinden is afforded by a custom formerly prevalent in Appenzell-Exterior and a few other cantons where for centuries a *Narrengemeinde*, or Fools' Assembly, was held on the day following the great political event of the year. At the *Narrengemeinde* practical jokers staged a performance in which all the personal peculiarities and political mistakes of leading local statesmen were satirized unmercifully to the huge delight of the attendant crowd, which at the end of the farce always conferred by election upon the more dignified authorities of their little realm certain offices of a highly undignified character. It is obvious that the peasant comedians of Appenzell failed to achieve that fine combination of causticity and caution for which the Gridiron Club of Washington is famous. Further, it is alleged that the ringleaders of the *Narrengemeinde* were amenable to *Trinkgelder*, always religiously consumed as such, which some of their intended victims paid in order to be relieved from the shafts of sarcasm. On both grounds no doubt the Fools' Assembly, while immensely popular with the masses, was anathema to the higher cantonal authorities, ecclesiastical and secular, who fulminated and legislated against it unceasingly from 1680 to 1811. Following the latter date the jovial institution went out of existence, although its memory is preserved in Appenzell by the use of its name to designate the Monday following Landsgemeinde Sunday, both days being observed locally as holidays.

---

[5] The text of the anthem, purely religious in character, which is sung at the *Landsgemeinde* of Appenzell-Exterior, may be found in J. Weber, *Deine Heimat,* p. 112.

All other popular processes of government in Switzerland—campaigns, elections, and referendum votes—are matters of pure routine. Swiss Landsgemeinden, on the other hand, possess a centuries-old ritual and colorful ceremonial features which, while simple and inexpensive, are impressive in the highest degree. Variations occur from canton to canton; but the former procedure of Uri, while typical, was perhaps the most picturesque. After the people had attended divine worship at Altdorf, they formed in procession at the foot of the Tell Statue in the market square and marched three miles to the historic meeting place at Bötzlingen. Here in the greenest of green meadows, spangled with field daisies, the ring was formed, the oath was taken, and the political business of the year transacted.

While perhaps not so picturesque as the Landsgemeinde of Uri, that of Glarus is even more impressive. In the latter canton the meeting takes place in the spacious public square of the capital, but the precipitous heights of the Glärnisch, the Frei Berge, and the Gufelstock, which wall in the town, dominate the scene, dwarfing to insignificance the somewhat commonplace urban surroundings. It is not unusual for six thousand men to attend the Landsgemeinde of Glarus. They stand during the whole meeting, crowding to the last inch of space the wooden benches arranged tier above tier in a great circle, within which a small open space is reserved for officials. As the hour set for the Landsgemeinde approaches, all the church bells of Glarus ring out in brazen chorus. What follows and the impression it makes upon the participants may best be set forth in the words of one of the most gifted of the younger Swiss authors, Eugen Wyler, himself a resident of the canton.[6]

> What had come together there at the foot of the Glärnisch was the power-house of the people of Glarus. The power-house of a people of workers. A people which exhaled the odor of sod fresh turned by the plow, of mountain huts, of shop and factory. Furrowed countenances, calloused hands, work-worn bodies, told the story plainly that hard and unremitting toil was the common lot of all. And yet with what strange pride there sounded in their heavy tread, there flashed from their eyes: the spirit of the Landsgemeinde. The spirit of oath bound comrades! That each one of them, be he young or old, high or low, had come to help further the well-being of all. That all possessed the same rights, the same duties. No one more; no one less. If, indeed, here and there antagonisms of various kinds made themselves felt among the people, yet each one always knew that, in spite of any existing differences, a common spiritual bond held them all together, made them a united folk. The bond of love of home and fatherland, from which come the highest goods: Justice, Freedom, Peace. . . . .
>
> To the tones of the Landsgemeinde march the procession of officials made its way from the state house. In advance a troop of militia with rifles, the barrels of which glistened blue in the sunlight, slung over their shoulders—all tanned, big-boned youngsters. Next a band with shining brassy instruments—"Tiri—li-li-li—Schadara—boom—boom—boom!" With firm tread the shakoed musicians pressed onward. Behind them two heralds bearing the magnificent sword and scepter of state, both tall figures in fluttering red robes; next in sober black the Landamman, the secretary of state, and the other members of the administration, men of earnest countenance and dignified gait. Following them came the representatives, the councilors, and judges. A second company of armed militiamen closed the procession. Behind there pressed in, wave after wave, the multicolored crowd of sightseers, stretching back beyond the limit of vision.
>
> In the open place at the center of the army of men already assembled the procession came to a halt. The music ceased. The members of the Council strode to their places. And while the final solemn strokes of the bells still resounded from the fronts of the rows of houses surrounding the Landsge-

---

[6] The passage quoted is from his novel, *Der Stausee,* a capital story of Glarner life which won first prize in a competition participated in by thirty-eight writers in 1922. The prize was offered by the Swiss Middle Press Association.

meinde place, the Landamman, a tall commanding figure of seventy with snow-white hair, ascended the orator's platform. Immediately surrounding the rough board tribune at which he stood, the youngsters of the canton, not yet of voting age, were assembled in the place of honor reserved for them so that they might learn in the presence of their fathers how to hold a Landsgemeinde. A brown-headed swarm of boys with shining eyes and fresh clear faces.

The sound of the bells died away. Deep silence descended. Then the Landamman took the sword of state in his hands and opened the Landsgemeinde with a patriotic speech. He admonished the people to quiet deliberation, to unity, and mutual understanding. "In the spirit of our forefathers may the people maintain their inner strength and sound good sense. The love of country! Let what the majority of the citizenship resolves be upheld loyally and firmly; let the minority obey without hesitation. God grant that the spirit of freedom, of devotion to right, and of justice and truth, may quicken us at all times; that the Landsgemeinde may remain always an incomparable festival of self-control, of independence, and of the free will of the people; that we may all work together with pure hearts for the welfare of our land. Men of Glarus! Comrades of the federation! No other people on earth stands upon so high a stage of freedom. Let us never forget that our forefathers poured out their heart's blood fighting for this freedom. With strong unshakable devotion they fought! May we in our own generation never waver; may we always stand as firm as the sublime works of nature which surround us. Strong and unchangeable in loyalty to the home land! . . . ."

Then the leader gave the sign of the oath. And the men uncovered their heads. All of them, so far as the eye could see. An army of men, standing, silent and reverent; of men to whom the moment was earnest and holy as the hour of God.

Rising, the gray-bearded secretary of the Council recited aloud in ringing far-carrying tones the formula of the oath: "We promise and swear to maintain in truth and loyalty the constitution and laws of the federation and of the land of Glarus, to protect and defend the honor, unity, and power of the fatherland, its independence, the freedom and rights of its citizens, as truly as we pray that God may help us!"

A forest of hands lifted itself in response to the oath. "This we swear." Solemnly the heavy murmur of the response lifted itself, rustled through the rows of the immense crowd of men. The folk swore fealty to the federation. It vowed anew loyalty to country and constitution. These broad-shouldered, tanned men stood there with uncovered heads, their eyes and hands lifted toward heaven as in prayer.

The arms sank again into the crowd; again the heads were lowered. Silent stood the people, silent as if it had just received the blessing of its God!

Politically the Landsgemeinde suffers from defects which are often criticized.[7] Regarded as ceremonial, however, it is the most deeply impressive manifestation of the democratic spirit that the world has to offer. It is, moreover, as simple as it is impressive. The procedure followed to the present day is an outgrowth of nearly seven centuries of popular experience, an experience that "puts to shame the boasted antiquity of kingly dynasties, which, by its side, seem but as innovations of yesterday."[8] There can be no doubt also that the educational effect of the Landsgemeinde is potent. Glarus is peculiarly happy in the custom, noted above, whereby the youth of the canton are brought into the very center of the ring that they may learn the processes of direct self-government before they are called upon to practice them. It is the nearest approach to an initiation into citizenship which exists in Switzerland. In all the other Landsgemeinde cantons, however, children accompany their parents to the meetings, and the impressions thus made last throughout life.

MEMORIALS

With nineteen whole and six half-cantons, some of which had a variegated history of their own for hundreds of years before entering the confederation, there is no dearth of anniversaries to be celebrated in Switzerland. And celebrated they are, so frequently and so vividly that all salient events in the life of canton or nation are kept fresh in the minds of the people.

One favorite type of festival is that commemorating the date of the entry of a canton into the confederation. In ordinary years it is observed very quietly, but when a centennial occurs—and with so many cantons centennials are by no means rare—the event is celebrated with great enthusiasm and the most scrupulous care for historical accuracy, all available resources of dramatic and musical art being called into cooperation. Thus Schwyz commemorated its six hundredth anniversary in 1891, and during the same decade festival plays on a large scale were presented in Bern, Basel, Thurgau, Chur, Solothurn, and other places. A new high standard for centennials was set in 1901 by the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the entry of Schaffhausen into the Swiss Confederation. The poet Arnold Ott, already famous for earlier compositions of the same character, was selected by the centennial authorities to write an original historical drama for the occasion. Men of almost equal eminence in their various fields were called in to compose the music, direct the acting, and paint the scenery for the presentations. The play was given in the open air, a gigantic stage being erected in a meadow near the city of Schaffhausen. As players, 1,267 citizens drawn from every class of the population took part. Five presentations were offered in all, and at every one the 6,000 seats available were sold out, while additional thousands watched the play from nearby hills. In printed form the Schaffhausen festival-drama ran to twelve editions, yielding the author 12,000 francs in royalties—a very considerable return for such work in so small a country as Switzerland. Centennial celebrations on so great a scale are of much more than purely local or cantonal significance; indeed, they are regarded as truly national events. They attract visitors from all parts of the country; they figure largely in the news columns of the principal papers which always send their best critical writers to report on each performance. That they greatly deepen the historical and patriotic feeling of the Swiss people is beyond question.

---

[7] Cf. chap. v.

[8] E. A. Freeman, *Growth of the English Constitution*, p. 2.

A second type of celebration common in Switzerland is devoted to the commemoration of victories by which the life of a canton or of the confederation was preserved. Thus the citizens of Basel celebrate the anniversary of the Battle of St. Jacob on the Birs (August 26, 1444) by processions and patriotic speeches. Similarly, the Genevese observe as Escalade Day, December 12—the anniversary of the unsuccessful attempt by the Duke of Savoy to take the city by treachery in 1602. On this occasion it is customary to hold services in the churches, including the reading of the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Psalm, after which the people indulge in a kind of carnival featuring small *marmites* in memory of the iron pot full of boiling water which was dropped by an old woman with such telling effect upon the head of one of the leaders of the Savoyards.

The Battle of Morgarten (1315), in which the peasant foot soldiers of the young confederation gained their first astounding victory over the flower of Austrian chivalry, is commemorated by an annual service in the old Chapel of St. James, one mile south of the battlefield. The victory at Sempach (1386) is celebrated yearly on the first Sunday after St. Ulrich's day. Delegates of the government and the clergy, together with the citizens and school children of the town march in procession to the battlefield, gathering around the Winkelried Stone, erected in honor of the mythical hero who gave his life in order that the Austrian phalanx might be broken. Here a speech is made by the representative of the government, after which services are held in the old chapel on the battlefield, including the reading of historical documents, a sermon, and high mass. Masses are also said for the repose of the souls of the fallen soldiers. After the services in the chapel the participants return to Sempach, where the remainder of the day is spent in a pleasant social reunion with speeches, music, and a banquet.

At Näfels in Glarus the anniversary of the battle of 1388 is celebrated on the first Thursday in April of each year. Every commune in the canton sends its leading men as delegates to the memorial services. In accordance with a resolution passed by the first Landesgemeinde held after the battle of 1388, it is the custom to read at the services the names of the citizens of Glarus who lost their lives in this engagement —there were 54 of them whereas it is estimated that 2,500 of the Austrian invaders perished. A special feature of the occasion is known as the *Näfelserfahrt*, the pilgrimage of Näfels, consisting in a procession which makes a halt at each of the eleven memorial stones set up to indicate the spots where the eleven unsuccessful attacks were made by the enemy. Other religious and social observances follow as at Sempach. Occasionally a celebration of this sort is marked by the discussion of some pending political question. Thus at the Näfels anniversary of 1928 the Landamman of Glarus, in the course of his patriotic address, took occasion to recommend the passage of new legislation against alcoholism.

Similarly, the victories over Charles the Bold at Grandson (March 2, 1476), and at Morat (June 22, 1476) are commemorated in the various cantons which furnished contingents to the army of the confederates during the campaign against Burgundy. In 1926, the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the second of these battles was celebrated on a national scale. More than fifty thousand visitors crowded into the little city of Morat for the occasion. The *cortège* to the battlefield was led by the school children of the place and by official delegations representing the federal and all the cantonal governments. These were followed by numerous detachments of soldiers wearing the colorful costumes and bearing banners, weapons, and armor of 1476. The principal oration of the occasion was delivered by Heinrich Häberlin, president of the confederation. In accordance with Swiss custom, the celebration was concluded by an original festival play, the work of Professor Flückiger, dealing in three tableaux with local events immediately preceding and following the battle. Fortunately, Morat has preserved better than any other Swiss town its ancient castles and battlemented walls, which stand today just as they did in 1476 when they frowned defiance to the advancing hosts of Charles the Bold. For the imposing pageant of 1926 they provided a perfect frame.

Considering the extremely warlike history of the country down to the nineteenth century, it can scarcely be maintained that the Swiss indulge to excess in the commemoration of military victories. Even on such occasions the note struck by speakers is never belligerent and seldom that of the glory of war. If the moral drawn is one of preparedness, it is always preparedness not for offense but defense. The prominence given to religious services in all such celebrations is a point worth noticing. Modest as are ceremonies commemorating victories, the battlefield monuments of Switzerland are still more modest. In spite of the large number of places marked with crossed swords on the map of the country, there is nothing which can be compared to the massed atrocities of sculpture at Gettysburg. It is significant that the most elaborate public monument in Switzerland, that on the old wall of Geneva, is devoted not to war but to the Reformation. The most beautiful and poignant of its monuments, the Lion of Luzern, renders sublime tribute to the loyalty of the 780 Swiss soldiers who fell in the defense of a Bourbon king in 1792. It is quite as effective, however, as a perpetual tragic testimonial against that hoary medieval abuse, the sale of mercenaries into the service of foreign powers. At Stans in Unterwalden a simple but effective sculptured group erected in 1886 on the five hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Sempach, commemorates the heroic self-sacrifice of Arnold Winkelried, who, according to tradition, gathered "with a wide embrace, into his single heart, a sheaf of fatal Austrian spears." For the most part, however, the battle monuments of Switzerland are simple shafts bearing commemoration tablets. If the loss of life was not great, the names not only of the officers but also of the private soldiers who fell are engraved upon the latter. No doubt both the small number and the plainness of such monuments are to be attributed in part to the relative poverty of the country. Military memorials so magnificent as those found in the great neighboring states are out of the question for Switzerland. Other than economic factors are involved, however. In this as in every other relation of life the Swiss dislikes pomp and grandiosity. Moreover, it is felt to be unseemly to commemorate blatantly victories won in civil wars—and many of the Swiss wars were civil wars—against cantons which for generations now have been peaceful neighbors and fellow-members of the federation. Not a little of the reprobation of civil war is carried over in Swiss thought to the reprobation of all war. Out of such a soil costly and imposing battle monuments do not grow.

In ordinary Swiss graveyards military rank and active service are recorded upon the headstones. Memorial associations hold services in the cemeteries from time to time and fire salutes over the bodies of departed comrades. Some of the most touching monuments in Swiss churchyards are devoted to the memory of soldiers interned in the country and dying there during the Franco-Prussian War and the World War. It is noteworthy, however, that civil distinctions and service in elective or appointive office find a place among the *memento mori.* Thus, in one country churchyard three "village Hampdens" are credited among other things with the following official services:

> Cantonal Administrative Councilor
> Teacher, Town Clerk, and Civil Record Officer
> Mayor, Cantonal Councilor, and Founder of the
> Watch Industry in———.

Quite the most astonishing thing about Swiss war memorials, whether graved in stone or printed in the pages of history, is the absence or extreme brevity of any mention of generals. Private soldiers who fell are remembered modestly, but there is no glorification of Alexanders, Caesars, or Bonapartes, for the good and sufficient reason that they did not exist. From Morgarten in 1315 to Marignano two centuries later, the Swiss won, virtually without great leaders, a marvellous succession of victories against the feudal armies of the proudest Central European powers, officered by great lords and noble knights encased in armor from head to foot. Owing to their poverty, soldiers of the mountain country had to fight without such protection; indeed, it was largely to this apparent disadvantage that their most brilliant achievements may be attributed.

In order to make headway against enemies clad in plate and mail, the Swiss developed anew the phalanx, a swift-moving mass of men who wore only leather jerkins or buff-coats, with now and then perhaps a steel cap or breastplate—a mass bristling on all sides with an impenetrable hedge of pikes or halberds, capable of dealing a terrific impact and bearing down relentlessly until the foe was exhausted, then opening up at the sides or rear to permit the egress of axemen, who made short work of knightly opponents weighted down and utterly tired out by their heavy armor. Given the conditions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the phalanx was a tremendous engine of war, as effective as it was simple, and all the more redoubtable because of the ferocious bravery of the men who contrived it, men who neither asked nor gave quarter and who not infrequently sullied their victories by the wholesale slaughter of prisoners, even of luckless mercenaries who fell into their hands. It was a mass-machine, and the terror it inspired gave the Swiss their innumerable victories and conquests from Morgarten to Marignano.

Into the technical causes of the downfall of this system of national tactics—chiefly gunpowder and artillery, large princely levies, trained generalship, and military engineering—it is not necessary to go here.[9] With the defeat at Marignano the Swiss career of conquest was at an end; and thereafter for the most part they fought, bravely always but ingloriously, as mercenaries in the armies of foreign princes, emperors, and popes, or in civil wars against each other. What is of particular interest from our present point of view is the fact, already referred to, that during the period of military ascendancy they developed no great generals. From the earliest times the whole spirit of the people, a thoroughly jealous democratic spirit, was hostile to high centralized command. The troops of the Landesgemeinde cantons elected their military officers just as they elected their civil officials. In the larger city states captains were nominated by the governing councils. Local jealousy was strong, the troops of one canton were apt to prove restive under leaders of another canton; hence the appointment of a commander in chief remained the exception rather than the rule. Possibly, also, some of the Swiss civil authorities, familiar with contemporary Italian military conditions, were disinclined to give any local Sforzas an opportunity. The tradition thus established still persists: in ordinary times the Swiss federal army is obliged to get along without a commander in chief. It is only when an emergency arises which requires mobilization upon a considerable scale that the Federal Assembly chooses a general, who thereupon takes control of the whole military situation under the direction of the Federal Council. When, at the outbreak of the World War, Ulrich Wille was elected to this position, it was the first time the Swiss army had had a commanding general since 1871. In the whole course of the nineteenth century his only predecessors were General Herzog, during the Franco-Prussian War, and General Dufour, during the Sonderbund war of 1847 and the anti-Prussian uprising over Neuchâtel in 1857.

There was, moreover, an amazing democratic freedom of speech on the part of the rank and file in the Swiss armies of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; private soldiers did not hesitate to talk frankly, even menacingly, to their temporary commanding officers.

---

[9] The whole story of Swiss military predominance and downfall is brilliantly told by Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages,* II, Book xi, 233–80.

> Before Bicocca the cry was raised, "Where are the officers, the pensioners, the double-pay men? Let them come out and earn their money fairly for once: they shall all fight in the front rank today." What was even more astonishing than the arrogance of the demand was the fact that it was obeyed. The commanders and captains stepped forward; . . . . hardly one of them survived the fight.[10]

Whenever an engagement threatened, councils of war were held, composed of captains of cantonal contingents, which made all dispositions for the impending battle. Contrary to the old saw about the fate of armies commanded by debating societies, the Swiss were almost invariably successful because their councils of war were always eager and ready to fight. Hence the apparent paradox of two centuries of military predominance without generals.

Of course, exceptions to the foregoing may be noted, but there are enough of them only to prove the rule. In the earlier wars of the confederacy Rudolf of Erlach would seem to have the clearest title to military genius; but Bern, which boasted after the victory at Laupen (June 21, 1339) that God had become a citizen of that city, has not yet erected a monument to his memory. General Dufour's masterly conduct of the federal army in 1847 brought the Sonderbund war to an almost bloodless end in twenty-one days, but he is celebrated quite as much for his merciful conception of how war should be waged which spared the lives of his fellow-countrymen as for his swift and brilliant strategy. In short, there is virtually nothing in the history of Swiss wars as read by the youth of the country in the schoolbooks today which might inspire them with a thirst for the glory of military leadership. On the other hand, there is everything to remind them of the loss of blood, the hopelessness of further conquests, the disgrace of mercenary soldiering, the destruction of homes and goods, of flocks and herds, and all the manifold burdens of war which must be borne by the mass of common soldiers and the mass of common people.

From a purely political point of view, the history of Swiss military predominance during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may seem one of large futility and ultimate frustration. Thus Charles Oman writes:

> Hence a long record of wonderful victories leading to inadequate results; jealousy between canton and canton lost many a brilliant chance; mere narrow lack of political knowledge and petty greed co-operated. And the Confederacy, which once and again seemed likely to create a new and important military state dominating Central Europe, never rose to its opportunity.[11]

---

[10] Oman, *op. cit.,* p. 280. The Battle of Bicocca was fought in 1522.

[11] *Op. cit.,* p. 259.

Undoubtedly, yet the balance is not altogether on the debit side of the ledger. If Switzerland had permitted the development of great generals, it might indeed have risen to the eminence in territory and power attained later by France and Germany, but it could have done so only at the sacrifice of its character as a people dedicated to liberty and self-government. After the great generals would have come kings or military despots. That it would have used the strength so gained to any better purpose than did its two great neighbors later is doubtful. On the other hand, to have avoided a Bonaparte and a William II, to have escaped the blood-bath of the Thirty Years' War and the World War, are no small boons. Finally, to have demonstrated the possibility of reconciling three languages and two religions, to have achieved independence and popular government even on a relatively small territory, may be worth more to the world than "to create a new and important military state dominating Europe."

FLAGS AND COATS-OF-ARMS

Apparently no effort is made in Switzerland to develop a cult of the flag by ceremonials of salutation such as are familiar in the United States. Nevertheless, there is no citizenry in the world which is more interested in patriotic emblems of all sorts, not only in the national flag itself but in the flags of each of the cantons, their colors, and their coats-of-arms as well. It is doubtful if any large percentage of Americans know the flag of their states; on the other hand, it is certain that to nearly all Swiss the colors of their canton are quite as familiar as the red and white of the federal emblem. On the basis of this fact alone, one might form an adequate notion of the much greater strength of the states' rights sentiment in Switzerland. On all holidays flags, both national and cantonal, are displayed; nor are the latter any less numerous or less prominent than the former. A typical illustrated postal card, popular in Geneva, shows St. Peters decorated for some civic event. The body of the somewhat somber cathedral is portrayed, quite appropriately, in black and white; but one of its towers is bright with the red and yellow of the flag of Geneva while the other tower flaunts the red and white of the federal emblem. It is not only on holidays, however, that colors are displayed in Switzerland. A custom prevailing throughout the country of painting the shutters of all public buildings of a canton with its colors, arranged in an extremely striking flaring design, makes the latter familiar to everybody.

In addition to flags, local, cantonal, and federal coats-of-arms are widely displayed and recognized by the Swiss. School textbooks on history and civics usually contain illustrations of these emblems with an account of their origin and significance. Some of them, as, for example, the bull's head of Uri and the two faithful ravens of Meinrad, which still fly in the banner of the people of Einsiedeln, go back to early legends.[12] Emblems of this type appeal to a large section of the population in a very direct way. Coats-of-arms are commonly considered aristocratic devices; but in spite of the democratic character of the country, the number of Swiss families who bear them is beyond computation. Two cantons, Uri and Glarus, possess a complete national genealogy. In other rural districts where the population has remained fixed for generations, coats-of-arms are possessed by every peasant family. Descendants not only of the aristocratic but of merchant and craftsmen classes in the cities also carry them. During the Middle Ages apparently every Swiss was considered qualified to display coats-of-arms. At present the same liberty prevails, with the additional right to change them at will provided there is no infringement of the acknowledged emblems of other families. In spite of the somewhat free and easy nature of these customs, there is, with the exception of a comparatively small number of the newly rich, no doubt of the genuineness of the heraldic devices so commonly displayed in Switzerland. Hence the general interest in cantonal emblems, for the latter are often interwoven with the arms of the family. And the latter keep alive the memory of family history, the deeds of ancestors in the service of the state, sometimes running back for hundreds of years.

COSTUMES

No peculiarity of old-time Switzerland attracted more attention from travelers than the colorful peasant costumes once worn on all festival occasions. Each canton—indeed, each valley in some cantons—had its own styles of dress for both men and women. Many of these *Trachten* were extremely beautiful; all of them were redolent of local custom and local history. Nor were they simple and inexpensive by any means. The handiwork of housewives and village seamstresses, nevertheless they were often rich in materials, complicated in pattern, stiff with embroidery and ornament.[13]

Although superior in durability and beauty to modern styles, the wearing of Swiss peasant costumes became more and more rare during the last hundred years. With the advent of railroads, commerce, and tourists there was danger that they would disappear altogether from festivals and fairs, weddings and religious processions, becoming mere museum pieces clothing headless dummies in glass cases. More recently, however, there has been a reaction. No doubt the open-air plays, with their insistence upon historical accuracy in the minutest details of costuming, had something to do with the revival of interest in the old *Trachten.* Within the last few years other influences have been brought to bear. Those elements in Swiss life which look with little favor upon the forces, especially those coming from the outside world, that make for uniformity in all details of life, and which believe, moreover, that only by the preservation of the individual character of the people can the independent existence of the country be justified, have begun to band together to restore as many of the old traditions as possible.

---

[12] M. Lienert, *Schweizer Sagen und Heldengeschichten,* pp. 10, 24.

[13] Frau Juli Heierli, honored as *"Trachtenmutter"* by the Swiss, has published in three splendidly illustrated volumes, under the title, *Die Volkstrachten der Schweiz,* (Verlag Eugen Rentsch, Erlenbach-Zürich), a thorough historical study of local costumes. The first volume is devoted to the inner cantons, the second to Eastern Switzerland, and the third to Western Switzerland.

The preservation of peasant costumes is, of course, a part only of the whole movement in favor of the maintenance of the peculiar customs of the country. Until quite recently the few organizations which confined their attention to *Trachten* were purely local in character. From time to time, however, they managed to instigate displays that attracted wide attention. Thus, in 1922, peasants from all parts of canton Bern presented a *Bärndütsch-Fest* which filled the arcaded streets of the capital city with costumes once worn by great-great-grandmother and grandfather.[14] So delighted were the Bernese with this revival, that on two occasions since, in 1925 and again in 1927, similar festivals were held. On the latter of these occasions two thousand peasants wearing the ancient dress of the canton marched in procession.

The *Bärndütsch-Fest* of 1922 demonstrated, first, that Swiss city-dwellers are keenly interested in costume displays; and, second, that there still exists among the masses of the country population a real enthusiasm for the ancient *Trachten.* The financial purpose for which the festival was undertaken proves the latter point conclusively. It seems that a book intended both for scientific and popular reading had been prepared, dealing with the local dialect as a mirror of the Bernese popular character. Unfortunately, high printing costs prevailing during the after-war period prevented its publication. It was to gather funds for this purpose that the peasantry of the canton offered their services and carried to a successful conclusion the festival of 1922. The incident is particularly significant, since by common consent among the Swiss themselves there is no more hard-bitten, matter-of-fact type of individual on earth than precisely the peasant of Canton Bern. Perhaps the reputation ascribed to him is unjust; at any event, in the instance cited he showed himself willing to go to unlimited trouble for an ideal end.

---

[14] Cf. Otto von Greyerz in *Berner Geist, Zürcher Geist, Basler Geist,* p. 25.

In 1926 the Swiss Association for the Preservation of Costumes and the Cultivation of Folk Songs was formed at Luzern, taking the place of a loose commission which formerly united local groups operating in these two fields.[15] It is the purpose of the new organization to give national scope and a considerable measure of central direction to the movements represented. So far as old costumes are concerned, the Association frankly admits the impossibility and even the undesirability of reintroducing them to the extent that they were worn a hundred years ago. Nevertheless, it holds that they can and should be used to give a peculiar charm and a ceremonial tone to all patriotic occasions. In furtherance of this end the Association proposes to make, in connection with the Swiss Folk Lore Society, an exact study of old costumes, to promote the holding of exhibitions and festivals in which they are displayed, and to prevent the exportation of particularly fine old pieces. Beginning with the spring of 1928, it has undertaken the issuance of an illustrated magazine to appear both in German and French eight times a year, designed solely to give more initiative and force to the movement than it has previously enjoyed. Some measure of the success already attained by the Association is afforded by the general interest taken in the national-costume festival held under its auspices at Einsiedeln during the summer of 1929. It proved an altogether delightful affair which was attended by more than three thousand delegates and was reported at considerable length in the press of the entire country.

It was noted above that the *Trachten* are often quite costly, besides being heavy and uncomfortable to wear. Recognizing these facts, the Association proposes to enlist the services of women expert in dressmaking so that patterns may be worked out at once accurate historically and better adapted to modern conditions. In these various ways the new organization hopes to promote the purpose of those Swiss who agree with it in the conviction that "the intensification of traits of native character is a valuable service to the whole people."

---

[15] Cf. articles on this association by Hans Vonlaufen-Roessiger in *Der Staatsbürger,* January 16, 1927, p. 13; and September 1, 1924, p. 161.

HOLIDAYS

In the United States seven or eight national holidays are celebrated each year, causing in the aggregate no small interference with business. When one of these events falls on Sunday, it is becoming customary to transfer the civic celebration to the following Monday, thus breaking still further into the working time of the people. No doubt we are prosperous enough to be able to afford so many holidays; perhaps, indeed, they are made necessary by the extreme specialization, the rapidity, and the nervous tension of our industrial and commercial life. In Switzerland, on the other hand, there are but two national festivals, one of which, corresponding to our Thanksgiving day, always falls on Sunday. The other civic event, which may be compared to our Fourth of July, is a thing of comparatively recent origin. On August 1, 1891, the whole Swiss people commemorated on a grand scale the six hundredth anniversary of the "First Perpetual League" entered into between Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden—the germ of the present republic. Since 1891 the celebration of August 1 has become an annual event, constantly growing in favor. It is characteristic of this hardworking people, however, that although the anniversary is referred to as a "national holi*day*," the day itself is devoted to labor, only the evening hours being given over to celebration. No small part of the virtue of this manner of observing the occasion is thought to lie in the emphasis which it places upon the maxim: "Duty first." In this connection it should be remembered that Swiss elections and referendums are also held on Sundays. Thus, in Switzerland the performance of the practical duty of voting and the more sentimental observance of national festivals are both accomplished without encroaching in the slightest degree upon the working time of the people.

Although otherwise a purely secular affair, the celebration of August 1 is ushered in by the pealing of the bells of the churches, regardless of confession, in all the cities and villages throughout the land.[16] One who has heard the so-called "federal chimes" *(Bundeslauten)* in Bern or some provincial capital is not likely ever to forget the experience. One after another the bells, each deeper toned than its predecessor, take up the chorus; and for a quarter of an hour the air and seemingly the solid masonry of towers and walls quiver with their vibration. As night descends, the higher mountain peaks light up with fires *(Höhenfeuer)*, which cast their ruddy beams far and wide throughout the deeps of adjacent valleys. In public buildings and parks of the cities, in the market squares of smaller towns, or in quiet rural meadows where Landesgemeinden are wont to assemble, the people come together to listen to orators of note. In the larger centers it is a matter of pride to secure, if possible, one of the seven members of the Federal Council to make the principal address of the evening; and his remarks, so far as they touch upon topics of the day, are certain to be quoted and commented upon extensively in the press. Federal officials of lesser rank, cantonal officials, professors, lawyers, and other public-spirited citizens are drafted as speech-makers in smaller cities and towns. Naturally the general tenor of the addresses of August 1 is much the same everywhere. The heroic deeds and wise counsels of the fathers are extolled; the present generation is called upon to emulate them, putting aside cantonal and local jealousies, language, confessional and all other differences. It is a somewhat curious fact that while the celebration of August 1 takes as its historic starting-point the formation of the Perpetual League of 1291, it is also commonly referred to as Federal Day *(Bundestag)*. In the latter significance it is a commemoration of the federal constitution of 1848 and 1874, and hence of national unity as opposed to disintegrating tendencies.

---

[16] The ringing of church bells on the evening of August 1 was first provided for by a federal resolution *(Bundesbeschluss)*, in 1899.

In addition to patriotic oratory the celebration of August 1 usually presents a number of other features of interest. If there is a local singing society, it is called upon to render national anthems, the choruses being taken up by the assembled multitude. Thanks to the natural talent of the people and to the excellent musical instruction given in the public schools, such massed singing is always impressive, at times sublime in effect. Members of local gymnastic societies, garbed in tight-fitting athletic costumes of white, are invited to contribute to the evening's celebration, going through their evolutions and building up their intricate pyramids in the light of colored flares and rockets. Municipal and workers' bands also take part in the entertainment. In some cities there are processions displaying the costumes, insignia, and banners of medieval guilds; in rural communities many of the women appear in the picturesque dress of the countryside. If there is a lake near at hand, a night water-festival, featuring illuminated floats of a patriotic character, may close the celebration. In general, however, there is a refreshing absence of noisy demonstration, of elaborate or expensive display. Switzerland has not found it necessary to institute a "safety-first" campaign in connection with its national holiday, since the use of dangerous and noise-making fireworks is almost unknown. Nevertheless, complaint was made in Bern a few years ago (1927) that children in some sections of the city annoyed the neighborhood with firecrackers. Regret was expressed by the newspapers that there were no legal regulations to prevent the nuisance. The extremely curious suggestion was made in one journal that the firecrackers had been given to the children by older persons who disliked the national celebration and hoped to discredit it in this way. Other Swiss papers commented with disapprobation on the practice said to prevail in certain resorts of exploiting the celebration of August 1 on a large and expensive scale for the benefit of tourist visitors.

Modest and dignified as are the forms usually employed in the popular observance of August 1, to many Swiss they appear not wholly worthy of the great events and principles commemorated.[17] From their point of view oratory, singing, gymnastic exercises, and pyrotechnic display are well enough in their way. None of them, however, nor all of them together, can do justice to the spirit of self-sacrifice, of brotherly love and devotion, which inspired the men of 1291 and which have come to the rescue of the country at every crisis since. To cultivate and perpetuate this spirit, it is felt that more than words and patriotic genuflections are needed. Accordingly, a Swiss Federal Celebration Committee was formed in 1910 for the purpose of ennobling the celebration of the day by an annual service of sacrifice. Each year the Committee selects one or two agencies, sometimes educational or artistic but more frequently charitable in character, and calls upon the whole Swiss people to give largely for their support. For some weeks before August 1 the Committee displays posters calling attention to its work throughout the country. At the same time speakers refer briefly to the proposed collection and its purposes at meetings of clubs and associations of every sort. On August 1 itself, methods somewhat similar to those of American "tag-days" are employed. There is, however, nothing of the "drive" or competitive spirit which at times makes these occasions so offensive in the United States. At public squares, railroad stations, park entrances, and other places of public resort young women dressed in white and members of the Boy Scouts in uniform take their stand, and accept contributions from all who wish to make them, giving out in acknowledgment a little silken badge bearing the date and the familiar white cross upon a red shield.

Efforts are made to interest not only citizens, but visitors as well, in the work of the Committee. On August 1 guests in Swiss hotels and pensions find at their plates a leaflet soliciting subscriptions, which is printed in the three national languages and also in English and Dutch. It reads:

---

[17] The New Helvetic Society devoted part of its meeting at Bad Attisholz, June 2, 1928, to a discussion of the reform of the celebration of August 1. For a summary of the suggestions made see the *Bulletin* of the Society, 14. Jhrg., Heft 3 (May–June, 1928), S. 119 *et seq.*

> Love of liberty and independence was the bond that united our forefathers. Their ideal was to face trials and dangers as one man. The Swiss Committee for the Celebration of August 1 consider it their sacred duty to foster this sense of brotherhood. Let us prove our adherence by practical deeds of charity on our national fête-day. All public-spirited Swiss will be glad to help us, and our guests will grace the day by their willingness to assist us in our endeavors.

From 1910 to 1926, inclusive, the Committee has succeeded in raising, all together, 1,813,000 francs ($362,600). It is a significant fact that in spite of the economic distress of the country during the war the amounts contributed were much larger than for the years immediately preceding and following. Beginning again in 1923, however, the totals collected reached new high levels. In 1926 they amounted to 365,000 francs ($73,000); in 1927, to 350,000 francs ($70,000). From an American point of view, such sums seem modest indeed; nevertheless, on the basis of population alone, similar collections in the United States should yield $2,138,000 in 1926 and $2,052,000 in 1927. Among the various purposes to which the money contributed through the efforts of the Swiss Federal Celebration Committee has been devoted are the following: for the founding of the Swiss People's Library (1922); for the promotion of the physical and economic education of Swiss youth (1920); for the Pestalozzi Neuhoff Foundation in Birr (1914); for the Swiss Schiller Foundation and a sustaining fund for plastic arts (1919); for the Red Cross (1912, 1917); to fight tuberculosis (1913); for Swiss citizens needing relief because of the war (1915); for the blind (1923); for Swiss citizens needing relief in foreign lands (1924); for the deaf and dumb (1925); for mothers in need of relief (1926); for invalid sick-nurses (1927); for the relief of the aged poor (1928); for members of the Swiss defense forces needing relief (1916, 1929).

Celebration of the Swiss Prayer Day, or to give it its full name, the Day of Thanksgiving, Repentance, and Prayer *(Dank-Buss-und Bettag)*, is of much earlier origin than that of the national holiday of August 1. The former was instituted by the Evangelical Diet in 1639 out of gratitude for the preservation of the country from the horrors of the Thirty Years' War. On August 1, 1832, the Federal Diet declared it a national holiday, fixing the date for its observance as the third Sunday in September. At the present time it is the custom for the higher ecclesiastical authorities to issue Thanksgiving Day proclamations. Several decades ago, however, such proclamations were made by the higher cantonal authorities. Thanks to the earlier custom, Swiss literature was enriched by a number of proclamations issued in the name of the governing council of Zürich, written by the then cantonal clerk, Gottfried Keller.[18] One of these documents, written by the great Swiss poet in 1867, concludes as follows:

> As to the care for our bodily nourishment we must thank Eternal Providence that its blessings have not been withheld from the industry of the cultivators of our soil. . . . . May there be added the maintenance of world-peace in order that our labors in industry may bear fruit and that thousands of workers may be enabled to turn once more to steady employment. Yet, whatever may come to pass, we pray the Giver of all good gifts for one benefaction, that in times of trial and need he may not turn one class in bitterness and recrimination against another, but that all classes of the people, mutually indispensable as they are, shall support and aid each other in unity.
>
> Whether we may, with the feeling of full moral and spiritual health, venture to appear before the All Wise Being—that, dear fellow-citizens, must be answered by an earnest search within ourselves, a search to which above all things we must submit ourselves if we do not wish to become dead limbs upon our body politic. Here is the point at which we must petition the Lord for a clear eye and for power to uproot gross self-love, self-praise, and self-interest.
>
> May God confer upon us the capacity to adjust our domestic life in simplicity and good manners to our public life, holding open to the latter a healthy and prosperous development.
>
> To this end may he bestow upon us a fair and candid heart, and the power, coupled with the dignity and quiet of a people used to freedom, to advise and to do that which is necessary for the steady progress of church, school, and our civic life as a whole. To this end may he grant us firmness in truth, courage and conscience; may he protect us against the heat of evil passion which never bears good fruit.
>
> Could we be successful in developing within ourselves also those moral qualities of which Christ is our sublime exemplar, thus helping to make the fatherland richer, we would thereby contribute as much to its protection as with weapons of iron.
>
> Dear fellow-citizens! We beg you on the coming Day of Prayer in company with all your Swiss brothers in God to reflect upon his endless love, drawing therefrom that human love which alone makes life endurable even for free men.

---

[18] For the full texts of these proclamations, dated 1863, 1867, 1871, and 1872, see H. M. Kriesi, *Gottfried Keller als Politiker* (Frauenfeld; Huber, 1918), Appendix II, pp. 303–16.

Thanks to an earlier experience which befell Gottfried Keller, it is possible to distinguish the limits of toleration in Swiss Prayer Day proclamations. As addresses to a whole people, such documents must, of course, be general in appeal, avoiding contentious topics and matters that go too far afield or are over the heads of the people. On the foregoing grounds a proclamation which the poet drew up for the year 1862 failed to receive the approval of the governing council of Zürich; nevertheless, from a literary point of view it is by far the finest of the things he wrote on the observance of Prayer Day. Keller, in his draft for that year, congratulated the cantonal legislature and people upon a recent enactment removing the ancient civil disabilities imposed upon Jews. Torn by the spectacle of our own civil war, he included a moving reference to that great struggle. He ventured to call not only upon the churches to observe the day but also upon citizens not of a churchly frame of mind "that in the enjoyment of their freedom of conscience they should spend it not in restless diversions but rather should manifest in quiet meetings their respect for the fatherland." The climax was reached in the following philosophical but naturally somewhat unpopular sentences:

> If in our federal state the great Master Builder of history has set up not, indeed, a completed plan but rather an essay on a small scale, similar to a builder's model, the same Master may destroy it as soon as it no longer pleases him, as soon as it no longer conforms to his great plan. And it will no longer please him from that hour forth when we no longer struggle onward with manful earnestness, when we shall come to look upon untried resolutions as already deeds, when we shall wish to reward ourselves with a feast of joy for each easy expression of our power in the form of mere words.[19]

Of course, not all Swiss Prayer Day proclamations are touched with the genius of Gottfried Keller. Perhaps it is enough that once or twice in the history of a country utterances ordinarily of a machine-made type should take on pure literary form. On one notable recent occasion, indeed, they exhibited a partisan bias which caused considerable indignation. In 1920 the Catholic bishops of Switzerland, motivated it was alleged by a desire to increase the membership of the Christian Social Trade-Unions organized under clerical auspices, inserted in their proclamations a statement to the effect that "he who adheres openly to socialism as a system, to its fundamental views and principal purposes . . . . lacks the prerequisite which is essential to the worthy reception of a sacrament." Naturally, heated rejoinders were promptly forthcoming from pamphleteers of the aggrieved political party.[20] With this single exception, however, contemporary Prayer Day proclamations are free from innuendo or sensationalism and are couched in purely conventional form. Nevertheless, all of them breathe a civic spirit deeply religious at bottom—a spirit, as the threefold name of the day indicates, not only of thanksgiving but of repentance and of prayer as well. Nor has it become customary in Switzerland to make the celebration of the day center about the sports of the stadium or the pleasures of the table.

---

[19] Intense patriot as he was Keller deals with the thought of the downfall of the federation also in his *Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten.*

In addition to national holidays a few local festivals are observed. According to the federal Factory Law of 1914, each canton may fix eight holidays a year, on which labor is to enjoy the same privileges as on Sundays. Apparently, however, there is slight inclination to take advantage of this provision. Some of the local civic holidays partake both of a national and cantonal character, as, for example, when the event commemorated is the entrance of the canton into the Swiss federation. In Geneva, to cite but one instance of the sort, June 1 of each year is so celebrated. Exactly as in the case of the federal holiday of August 1, however, the industrious citizens of that canton continue their work throughout the day, reserving the evening hours for a simple and dignified commemoration of their union with the Swiss republic. Centenary anniversaries of such events are celebrated with more circumstances, as has been noted already. There are religious holidays in several cantons which may have some relation to local legend or history, but these are binding only on the members of the confession concerned. Also, the cantons may designate purely local holidays for special districts, as, for example, when some commune or valley wishes to celebrate a day famous in its annals. It is perhaps significant of the tendency to minimize the distinction of leaders, as contrasted with the services of the mass, that the Swiss have no holidays such as our Lincoln and Washington days.

Reckoning up all such events together—national, cantonal, and local—it still remains true that the Swiss are quite as economical in the matter of holidays as in all the other relations of life. As an offset to the limited number of their civic celebrations, it may be noted that some working time is consumed by the numerous rifle-shooting, athletic, musical, costume and other festivals which are to be referred to in a later section. However, these festivals are only for the particular classes interested in them, and involve no cessation of labor by the great mass. The most casual traveler in Switzerland cannot help observing on every hand evidences of the extreme industriousness of its people. Town and countryside alike are trim, neat, scrupulously cared for; every blade of grass looks as if it were washed, combed, and brushed daily. City clerks and artisans are increasingly fond of holidays and desire more of them, but at the desk or in the factory they are steady workers. As to the agricultural population, certain it is that no holiday, no festival—nor Sunday itself, for that matter—keeps any man, woman, or child out of the fields when it is good haying weather.

---

[20] Cf. *Das Bettagsmandat der Schweizer Bischöfe und der Socialismus* by "Peregrinus" (Olten: Das Volk, 1921).

CHAPTER XIII

CULTS—MARKSMANSHIP, GYMNASTICS, SINGING AND MUSICAL SOCIETIES

MARKSMANSHIP

Three cults have been developed in Switzerland to an extraordinary degree—the cults of marksmanship, of gymnastics, and of music. Each is organized locally, cantonally, and nationally; every year each provides a number of festivals characterized by rather elaborate ceremonials and by keenly contested competitions, in which the prizes gained are esteemed far more for the honor they confer than for the value they represent. With such widespread interest, not to say passion, are all three followed that it is difficult to determine which of them has the greatest hold upon the popular mind. However, the cult of marksmanship is most typical of the Swiss, and the one in which their pre-eminence is most clearly established. While brilliant results are achieved in both gymnastics and music, the organization and methods of these two cults are shared largely by the Germans.

Something of the fame of Wilhelm Tell among his own people must be attributed to the incomparable mastery of his art—an art which they so thoroughly understand—as well as to the deeds it enabled him to perform. Long before the time of their national hero, however, the Swiss were ardent archers with bow and arrow. Toward the end of the fourteenth century guilds of marksmen made their appearance in Zürich, Luzern, and elsewhere, taking the holy Antonius and Sebastian as their patron saints. With cross-bow and bolt, later with hand gun, arquebus, musket, and rifle, the practice of sharpshooting has been carried on, generation after generation, down to our own time. It was due to the skill thus acquired, coupled with other sterling military qualities, that Swiss recruits were so highly desired as additions to the armies of neighboring princes in the old days of mercenary service.

During the eighteenth century, when political decay and disunity brought the country to its lowest ebb of weakness, the practice of marksmanship was generally neglected. French intervention roused the people to a realization of their shortcomings, and early in the nineteenth century local shooting clubs sprang up on every hand. In its new form the cult was much more than a sport; it was avowedly, aggressively nationalistic. At Aarau in 1824 all the local organizations of the country united in the formation of the Swiss Shooting Society (Schweizerischer Schützenverein). The first article of its constitution states the purposes of the organization as follows:

> To draw another bond around the hearts of our citizens, to increase the strength of the fatherland through unity and closer connections, and at the same time to contribute, according to the capacity of each of our members, to the promotion and perfection of the art of sharpshooting, an art beautiful in itself and of the highest importance for the defense of the confederation.

All historians of the period admit the effectiveness with which the national organization of marksmen pursued its ends. From 1824 on, shooting festivals, not only local and regional but national as well, were held regularly. At a time when the federal idea was still buried beneath a mass of separatist interests and jealous cantonal sovereignties, such festivals became "the real garden-beds of Swiss national feeling."[1] "These Helvetic assemblies," wrote a contemporary observer, "have an electric effect upon the patriotism of the people; everything connected with them is designed to draw the Swiss together as if by magic into a nation."[2] It is a significant fact that during the period under consideration organizations of marksmen habitually used as their flag the white cross in a red field. Not until 1841 was the latter officially adopted as the national emblem.

On July 9, 1834, the young Gottfried Keller was expelled from school in Zürich. Three days later the first federal shooting festival held in that city was thrown open to the public. Having plenty of leisure on his hands the future poet, then fifteen years of age, observed the proceedings with vast interest. Most of all he was captivated by the bright colors and the joyous clamor of the festival; to a less extent, perhaps, by its underlying idea. In the center of the shooting park there towered a "tree of freedom" one hundred and fifty feet high, bearing at the top a gigantic federal flag. Even the restaurants for the refreshment of the crowd bore the names "Unity" and "Loyalty"; everywhere flashed the white cross in a red field, everywhere walls and arches bore patriotic maxims. To the youthful Keller the first federal shooting festival held in Zürich was the beginning of an interest destined to grow constantly with the years, and to find expression a decade later in one of the most beautiful of his short poems.[3] To the experiences of that glorious day and many others like it that were to follow, we owe also a delightful *novelle, Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten.* It presents a vivid picture of the national shooting festival held at Aarau the year after the adoption of the federal constitution of 1848, and may still be consulted with profit by those interested in the ritual of such occasions.

---

[1] H. M. Kriesi, *Gottfried Keller als Politiker,* p. 14.

[2] *Ibid.,* quoting from S. Zurlinden, *Bilder aus der Geschichte der Stadt Zürich, 1814–1914,* 2 vols. (Zürich, 1914, 1915).

[3] In the "Zyklus," *Lebendig begraben,* Ges. Wke. IX, S. 146.

Following the foundation of the Swiss Shooting Society in 1824, the movement developed rapidly. At present it embraces 4,020 clubs recognized by and receiving a subsidy for 1929 of 3,528,000 francs from the federal government, and enrolling altogether some 290,000 members. Under its auspices rifle practice goes on unceasingly, but the red-letter events on the calendar of the Society are the shooting festivals which it conducts, particularly the great national festival held every three or four years as a rule. In 1924 the one hundredth anniversary of the organization was celebrated on an elaborate scale in its natal city of Aarau, some 50,000 members taking part in the competitions.[4] A color guard of 1,250 Bernese sharpshooters, dressed in the historic costumes of their canton, accompanied the central flag of the Society from the capital to the festival grounds. Three members of the Federal Council, among them the president, delivered orations at great public meetings; and a patriotic play, specially written for the occasion, was performed nine times before audiences of 6,000 at each presentation. On the technical side, particular interest attached to the high scores made at Aarau due to the use, for the first time, of improved ammunition and of new weapons of materially greater precision. The most recent Swiss federal shooting festival was held at Bellinzona, July 12–28, 1929, its every event from the first match to the final crowning of the Marksman King being followed throughout the whole country with an intensity of enthusiasm which proves that the popularity of this national cult is not abating.

The purely voluntary activities of Swiss shooting societies are, in effect, a great and valuable addition to the military training of the country's manhood. One of the principal grounds of confidence in the army as a defensive force is the extremely high percentage of sharpshooters it contains. Because of lack of means, Switzerland has, as is well known, an exceedingly brief period of army service. All recruits are trained in marksmanship as a matter of course; but thanks to the popular passion for shooting, large numbers of them continue the practice for years afterward at their own expense in time and money. Some financial assistance is given by the federal government, but it is very modest in amount. Communes which build rifle ranges in accordance with official specifications receive small subsidies, and so also do shooting clubs which conform to governmental regulations. Of course, the requirement of the Military Department whereby a soldier belonging to the *Landwehr* must fire at least 30 shots and attain a certain standard of marksmanship each year introduces an element of compulsion into the matter which accounts in part for the large number of *Schützenvereine* in Switzerland.

---

[4] Owing to the war, the federal shooting festival of 1924 was the first held since 1910. *Der Staatsbürger* of July 16, 1924, is dedicated to the meeting of that year, and may be consulted for details.

One might expect that the absorption of so considerable a share of the people's interest in marksmanship would foster a militaristic spirit. There is very little evidence that it does, although Socialists and pacifists sometimes criticize shooting clubs and festivals on that ground. In fact, the sporting and social elements of rifle meets clearly predominate in the minds of participants. To the Swiss, love of peace and familiarity with the use of lethal weapons are not incompatible. A reconciliation of these apparently irreconcilable ideas is nobly phrased by the inscription upon the base of the monument at Aarau commemorating the foundation of the national shooting society in that city:

Mit Morgenstern und Hellebarden	"With spiked clubs and battle-axes
So zogen einst die Väter aus;	Our fathers marched forth in their day;
Mit blanken Stutzen zieh'n die Enkel	With glistening rifles march their children
Zum frohen Fest, zum blut'gen Strauss.	To joyous feast, to bloody fray.
Wann kommt die Zeit, wo nur mit Waffen	When comes the time in which with weapons
Des Geistes wird gekämpfet werden?	Of reason only we shall fight?
Wenn Freiheit, Toleranz und Liebe	When freedom, tolerance, and friendship
Die Herrschaft führen einst auf Erden.	On earth shall reign at last by right."

It is quite as characteristic of shooting, as of other Swiss sports, that no opportunity is lost for the cultivation of social relations. Each club has at least a room *(Schützenstube)* for the display of trophies and for the meetings of its members. In a number of centers the sharpshooting organizations possess splendid old houses, tastefully fitted out for their purposes—for example, the one at Basel, dating from 1466, and that at Sursee from 1514. Most of all, however, it is at the festivals which bring together competing teams from all parts of Switzerland that good fellowship reigns supreme. With the teams go many past-masters and young acolytes of the order, many amateurs and interested lookers-on. At the accompanying ceremonials there is plenty of oratory, the drinking of innumerable toasts, much expansiveness of spirit, and the making of friendships which cut across class, cantonal, and religious lines. Beyond all question the links thus formed at shooting meets, as also at gymnastic and musical festivals, constitute no small part of the collectivity of interests which bind together the whole Swiss people.

It is a striking fact that, in spite of the undeniably pacific outlook of the people of Switzerland, there is no civilized country in the world today in which larger numbers of men in mufti may constantly be seen going about with rifles under their arms. Certainly there is no country in which so ubiquitous a popping of firearms at shooting matches so disturbs the quiet of every Sunday morning and afternoon. Useful as marksmanship may be in case of invasion, it is obvious that the Swiss practice it largely with other ends in view. They admit that it does not contribute so largely to muscular development as gymnastic exercises. On the other hand, they point out that a sharpshooter, to attain distinction in his art, must possess the perfect physical and nervous poise which can be secured only by unremitting training and rigorous discipline. It is particularly the extreme delicacy and hair-like precision of marksmanship which fascinates many of them, just as they are fascinated by the making of the most accurate watches and chronometers. To others it is pure sport with all the rivalry of teams and more of the rivalry of individuals than our own baseball. As a sport, its devotees speak scornfully of football, fearing that the recent vogue of the latter may attract some of the younger members of the shooting clubs away from the old national pastime. If universal peace were to descend upon the earth, it is altogether probable that the Swiss would continue the practice of marksmanship indefinitely for the sheer love of the thing.

GYMNASTICS

For hundreds of years the Swiss have devoted themselves to physical exercises. In the sixteenth century Zwingli, who was a very practical theologian, strongly urged their use as educational devices. Severe as the struggle for existence in a mountain country must always be, it has never been sufficiently so in Switzerland as to absorb all the abounding energies of the people. Originally their principal exercises were simple and informal—running, leaping, stone-putting, and wrestling. In the latter sport the Swiss early developed a form peculiar to themselves known as *Schwingen.*[5] It is most appropriately named, for the rules permit each of the combatants to obtain a grip on the other's clothing, as a result of which one of them sometimes succeeds in lifting the other off the ground and swinging him bodily round and round through the air. In addition to *Schwingen* the Swiss also practice wrestling in the same manner as other European peoples.

Strenuously competitive the early forms of Alpine sports always were, even when practiced by the herdsmen of a single locality. They became a great deal more so, however, at meetings of groups of contestants representing all the neighboring valleys. On such great occasions the champions of each little village in the hills met, not only to put their individual strength and skill to the test, but also to establish the pre-eminence of their own locality in manly strength, skill, and endurance. It is one of these rural athletic festivals *(Schwing und Aelplerfeste)* which has been immortalized in Giron's canvas, hung at the head of the great staircase of the Bernese Museum of Art. Peasant and shepherd sport meetings go back to a very respectable antiquity; the first Wrestling and Alpine Festival, bringing together contestants from all parts of the canton of Appenzell, was held on August 21, 1521.

The French Revolution and the period of intervention following it seem to have suppressed temporarily all the normal manifestations of the Swiss spirit, among them athletic contests. As early as 1805, however, a great shepherd festival held at Unspunnen reawakened some degree of interest in native sports. Under the Pact of 1815 reaction dominated Swiss affairs. In order to make headway against the backward-looking spirit of the times, the university students of Basel, Bern, and Zürich organized in 1819 progressive *(Freisinnige)* associations, in the programs of which physical development was given first place. To these student organizations, partly political and partly athletic in their aims, the modern movement in Switzerland owes its origin. Originating in academic circles, the enthusiasm for vigorous sports spread through the youth of the land, local sections sprang up everywhere, and in 1832 the Federal Athletic Union (Eidgennössischer Turnverein) was founded.

The history of the movement in Switzerland since the foundation of the Federal Athletic Union has been one of constant expansion in numbers, spirit, and forms of sport pursued. In 1925 there were 23 associations, comprising 1,397 local sections with a total of 129,640 members. Of the latter some 40,000 are active, the others being "veterans" who still continue their interest and attendance although they are no longer able to participate in the more strenuous sports. A recent development has been the spread of enthusiasm for physical exercise among the women of the country. In 1925 their association, which is included under the Federal Athletic Union, had 264 local sections with 14,157 members. They devote themselves to gymnastic and ballet dancing, plastic posing, tableaux, Greek movements, evolutions with scarves, club-swinging, and the other lighter and more graceful forms of athletic exercises.

---

[5] For an historical account of this pictureque national sport, see E. Zschokke, *Die Geschichte des eidg. Schwingerverbandes* (Zürich: Füssli, 1924).

While, of course, summer is the season chosen for most gymnastic meets, the work of many local sections has recently been extended to include skiing, skating, and other winter sports. Under the auspices of the Federal Athletic Union a large number of preparatory courses are given in every section of the country. At present 20,000 youths are receiving such instruction, which, of course, is specially designed to fit them for active membership later in the Union. The systematic physical training which is given in public schools to children from the earliest classes onward also contributes to the well-nigh universal interest of the Swiss in athletic sports and organizations.

In the 1,400 local athletic sections of Switzerland strenuous systematic exercise is constantly carried on, but not too strenuously, for there is always an accompaniment of music and song and innumerable opportunities for pleasant social intercourse. It is in the frequent athletic meets, however—local, cantonal, and national—that the *Turnvereine* make their most gallant showing. Not a year passes without some large regional event that brings together thousands of athletes and thousands more of veterans and sport enthusiasts. For example, at the Fête Romande et Internationale de Gymnastique, held at Geneva, June 18–20, 1927, 55 sections of men and 8 of women were inscribed in the list of competitors. The presence of several sections from nearby French cities gave a certain international stamp to the affair.

All regional gymnastic meetings, however, pale into insignificance when compared with the giant federal festival which is held every three years in one of the principal cities of the republic. To this truly national event special trains from every part of Switzerland bring hosts of competitors and enthusiasts. At Geneva, where the federal festival of 1925 was held, the total number of competitors exceeded 18,000, and a staff of 150 judges was necessary to pass upon their efforts. The presentation of the program required six days, July 16–21, inclusive.

It opened with a festival play showing the development of gymnastics from antiquity to modern times. The patriotic character of the festival found expression in a ceremonial which is carried out at each of these national athletic events—the transfer from Bern to the scene of the celebration of the central flag of the republic and its solemn acceptance for the duration of the games by local dignitaries. Federal-President Haeberlin was the guest of honor on another occasion and delivered the speech of the evening.

In the midst of the more public events of the festival the great Plaine de Plainpalais fairly swarmed with white-clad athletes engaged upon the innumerable competitive features of the program. The latter fall under two main headings: national and artistic gymnastics *(National und Kunstturnen)*. National gymnastic events, which include leaping, stone-lifting, stone-putting, the two forms of wrestling, and the like, are contested by the heavier athletes. Artistic exercises are performed on the trapeze, parallel bars, or suspended rings and are judged primarily on the basis of their difficulty, combination, and beauty of execution. Of recent years a third type, known as "light athletics," has been added to festival programs. It is based on the ancient forms of gymnastic exercises originated by the Swiss. In addition to the foregoing there are all sorts of specialties: running, boxing, fencing, swimming, dances, and exercises with clubs, iron bars, or balls. It is impossible to think of Swiss gymnasts without visualizing the human pyramids they so delight to erect. Because of their scenic quality, displays of the latter sort are presented in the evening with spotlights or colored flares playing upon the perilously poised mass of muscle and bone. To quote John Addington Symonds,

> The crowning event of the Festival, for an aesthetical spectator, was when the thousands of the gymnasts stood drawn up in ranks and sections to perform their general exercises. These consist of various movements, bringing each limb by turns into activity, and displaying the whole muscular resources of the body. The wide field was covered with men, every one of whom moved in concert with the mighty mass, rythmically, to the sound of music. The show lasted for half an hour, and finer drill was never seen. It had not the overwhelming effect produced by the marching past of an army, or the wheeling of columns and forming of squares on a review day. But for plastic beauty, for variety of posture, for melodic cadence in the lithely swaying figures, it surpassed anything which I have known.[6]

[6] *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands*, p. 180. The quoted description refers to the festival of 1891, also held in Geneva. It applies equally, however, to the festival of 1925, with the exception that the number of men taking place in the mass drill (12,000 in the latter year) was much larger than in 1891. Luzern was chosen for the federal gymnastic festival held July 20–24, 1928.

As the foregoing description has indicated, there are striking differences between American athletic activities and Swiss gymnastic exercises. To us "the play's the thing"; we delight in the rude clash of groups of contestants and are little interested in manifestations of grace or plastic beauty. To the Swiss, aesthetic effects are always to be sought after and appreciated. On the other hand, they are little interested in organized games, although football matches have recently begun to attract a following. We play; they exercise. We match teams and are delighted at the unforeseen breaks of luck inseparable from mass tactics. As in most things Swiss, the educational approach is manifest; they are in sport for training, not for fun. They drill and drill interminably, undisturbed by the sudden swoop of opponents, until they have perfected themselves in the execution of intricate evolutions or the lifting of towering pyramids of human bodies. For the most part, Swiss competitions are between two or more sets of performances separately presented, not between two teams playing against each other. While they do become enthusiastic over combat, it is not combat between groups but between man and man, as in boxing, fencing, wrestling, and *Schwingen.*

A second marked difference between Swiss and American athletics is in the relative numbers of participants and spectators. We specialize, pitting small teams of professionals or semi-professionals against each other and filling enormous stadiums with tens of thousands of fat and flabby spectators. Switzerland, on the other hand, cannot boast of a single stadium, but it has thousands of gymnasia and playing-fields. To a much greater extent than the United States, it trains the masses of its citizens in athletics. They keep up their exercises well into mature manhood. If it were not for the lack of the spirit of playing games, it seems safe to say that they would long since have discovered golf, carrying on with it as a sport until overtaken by old age. In any event, the gatherings of elderly Swiss one sees at athletic festivals are not merely "fans," but veterans, who enjoy the fine points of the contests they witness all the more because of their own earlier participation.

It is beyond question that the athletic organizations of Switzerland exert a strong unifying influence. They bridge over all dividing lines of class, language, and religion; they bring together from every city, town, or remote mountain valley the youth of the land, welding it in a common enthusiasm. Friendships formed in the most impressionable and expansive years of life, as like as not between contestants who have mauled and bruised each other soundly, grow into permanent bonds not only of affection but of economic, family, or political interest as well. The sons of bankers or patrician families mingle with clerks and artisans in a city section; at festivals they compete with peasants and Alpine herdsmen belonging to a rural section, with lads from a cantonal school, or with university students preparing to become engineers, doctors, lawyers, professors, clergymen. All meet on the common ground of physical strength and skill; advantages of wealth, class, or family go for nothing.

The Swiss are accustomed to lay stress on the democratic discipline of their public school and military systems. They might well add the athletic organization of the country to the list. The latter, of course, is not universal in its membership as are the other two; but, on the other hand, it is superior to them in its voluntary character and in the enthusiasm it evokes among the devotees of sport. Negatively, a strong testimony to the effectiveness of athletic activities in fostering national spirit is afforded by the recent efforts of the clerical and socialistic parties to establish gymnastic organizations confined to their own members.[7] Needless to say, such efforts are strongly deprecated by all friends of the Federal Athletic Union.[8] That the gymnastic clubs of Switzerland cultivate a spirit of co-operation and discipline, contribute largely to the physical health of the citizenry, aid in preparing it for industry, and, if need should arise, for military defense, is admitted generally.

THE YOUTH MOVEMENT IN SWITZERLAND

In view of the numerous walking excursions which form so delightful a part of the school life of every child, it is rather remarkable that the Youth Movement, with its encouragement of longer tramping tours, has developed so late and as yet to so slight an extent in Switzerland. Among the Germans it grew slowly in the years prior to 1918, subsequently becoming a national cult of the first importance.[9] Leading statesmen of the new republican Reich recognize its value not only in a cultural sense but also as an offset to the physical deterioration caused by the World War and the blockade. Of course, friends of the movement in Switzerland are not influenced by the latter motive; moreover, the youth of the country has long been organized so thoroughly in both non-partisan and partisan gymnastic associations that scant room would seem to be left for new organizations to promote physical exertion. Perhaps, however, the formalism and ceremonial of athletic meets have been somewhat overdone; in any event, recent development of the more easy-going Youth Movement in Switzerland, as shown by Table IX, indicates that it may be standing on the verge of further rapid expansion.

---

[7] Cf. chap. iv.

[8] Cf. article by H. Kuhn, "Die Bedeutung der Eidgenössischen Turnvereine," in *Der Staatsbürger,* 9. Jhrg., Nr. 14 (July 16, 1925), S. 107.

[9] Cf. John P. Gavit, "The Gold Mine of Germany," in the *Survey,* XIV (February, 1929), 579. In 1927 there were 2,318 youth shelters in Germany, which accommodated 2,655,292 overnight guests in the course of the year.

Youthful participants in the Swiss movement follow much the same customs as their German brothers and sisters; dressing for the road as lightly as possible and encumbering themselves with no baggage to speak of, devoting themselves to hikes as long as their leisure allows, putting up for the night under the open sky, weather permitting, otherwise resorting to the somewhat sketchy shelters provided by their League, and engaging in interminable conversations on all topics dear to the heart of youth with chance-met *Wandervögel* (birds of passage) from every social class and every part of their own and neighboring countries. Incidentally, they are said to cherish sovereign contempt for fat tourists who whiz by them in luxurious automobiles, and to feel scant sympathy for Sunday-school philosophy or the smug middle-class point of view. Worst of all, it is alleged that they are willing to listen to roadside preachers of any doctrine—economic, political, theological, or moral—whom they may chance to encounter.

TABLE IX

Year	Youth Shelters	Overnight Guests
1925	35	3,819
1926	80	6,974
1927	120	13,743
1928	144	30,209
1929	177	....

Naturally, such unconventional behavior does not pass without reprobation from pillars of society who, being older, know better. So far, apparently, no sex scandals such as occurred in Germany have marred the record of the Swiss Youth Movement. Anxious members of the older generation fear, however, that it may be taken in tow by radical political parties. It is not denied that propagandists of socialism are interested in the movement, nor that, occasion offering, young participants in it listen to what these propagandists have to say. Owing to experience already gained in organizing their own junior sport, dramatic, and educational associations, leaders of that party are said to be able to approach the *Wandervögel* more adroitly than their rivals. On the other hand, representatives of middle-class parties and even of the Catholic Conservatives are associated with radicals on national and local boards which have charge of youth shelters, nor do they hesitate to exhort participants regarding political questions.

In response to criticism, chiefly from conservative quarters, the League of Swiss Youth Shelters (Bund Schweizerischer Jugendherbergen) recently issued a statement protesting that the organization is based upon the principle of political and confessional neutrality.[10] On the other hand, admission is frankly made that at times groups of young members—sometimes radical, sometimes reactionary in tendency—have sought to convert local shelters to their own way of thinking.

> How could it be otherwise? To err is human, even among the young. This does not touch the League as such; on the contrary, we consider it extraordinarily healthful that diverse movements and parties should play the game against each other in our own midst.

In conclusion, the statement of the League of Swiss Youth Shelters calls upon citizens of every shade of political opinion to affiliate with the organization, thus strengthening it and their own separate causes at the same time.

SINGING AND MUSICAL SOCIETIES

Like the gymnasts and marksmen, singers and musicians have contributed mightily to the cultivation of the federal idea in Switzerland. They are organized in societies everywhere throughout the country, and these societies delight to participate in festivals and competitions. Often they make joyous excursions into the mountains, accompanied by all the amateurs of the neighborhood and by the old "veterans" whose singing days are over but whose love of music is undimmed by age. Newspaper accounts of musical festivals, concerts, and *Ausflüge* are detailed and critical, indicating the wide popular interest they arouse. The fame of Swiss singing and music societies is not confined to their own country. As invited guests, they are heard with delight in cities of neighboring lands.

It would be impossible to present an adequate account of the innumerable local and cantonal festivals of music celebrated from one year's end to the next in Switzerland. Overtopping all these affairs of limited scope are the great federal singing festivals, one of which is held every three or four years in some large city. Some notion of the number of active participants in the country as a whole is afforded by the announcement made six months in advance of the federal musical festival held at Lausanne during the summer of 1928. At that early date 151 singing societies, belonging to 5 categories and totaling 12,160 singers, had entered the competitions. In addition to the foregoing, two societies located in foreign countries, the Harmonie Suisse, of Paris, and the Schweizermännerchor, of North America, had announced their intention to be present. To accommodate the members of the latter with their families and friends, a special steamer was chartered from New York.

---

[10] The statement may be found in full in *Der Staatsbürger,* 13. Jhrg., Nr. 18 (September 16, 1929), S. 143.

Another musical event of national scope is worthy of special mention. Every three years there is celebrated in some Swiss city a federal musical festival which attracts large numbers of visitors from all parts of the country. The eighteenth event of this kind, which occurred in La Chaux-de-Fonds during the summer of 1927, took the form of several presentations of Rossini's opera, *Guillaume Tell.* A local orchestra, six singing societies, and three gymnastic organizations participated in the presentations.

Reference has been made repeatedly in the foregoing pages to the unifying influence of the cults of music, gymnastics and marksmanship in Swiss life, past and present. Music is often spoken of as a universal language. To a very real degree it has actually served as such in Switzerland, binding together in the common pursuit of harmony populations speaking French, Italian, and Germanic dialects. Competitions both in gymnastics and marksmanship are such simple and tangible affairs that differences of language interpose few barriers to their successful conduct. Hence, they also have made considerable contributions to Swiss national feeling. All three cults are associated with social features of exuberant color and gaiety which add greatly to their unifying effects. The bonds thus formed are to be observed not only in Switzerland but even more markedly in those foreign countries where considerable bodies of Swiss reside. Invariably these *Auslandschweizer* organize themselves into Schützenvereine and Turnvereine, into singing and musical societies. Differences of religion, language, party membership, and social status which might have kept them apart in Switzerland are all forgotten in a foreign environment. It is such associations, with their loving practice of the cults dear to the fatherland, that keep Swiss sentiment alive in the hearts of her citizens abroad until their dying day. Through these associations largely, they maintain connection with the "old country," timing their occasional visits to participate in some great national festival. In the mental makeup of every Swiss, whether domiciled at home or abroad, the patriotic sentiment might be expressed to a large degree in musical notation, recalling the homely lilt of old folk songs. Visually it would be connected not only with the national flag—white cross in red field—but also with pyramids of tense gymnasts, or with the black circles of distant targets seen, sharply defined, through rifle-sights, and behind all, towering over all, a panorama of mountain peaks thrusting up their massive snow-clad heights into the deep blue of the lower sky.

CHAPTER XIV

ART; MUSIC; DRAMA—OPEN AIR PLAYS

ART

Just as the Swiss are accused of having no legends, so also they are accused of having no art. The falsity of the former accusation is easily demonstrable. As to the latter, it must be admitted at once that economic conditions in a small mountain country are not favorable to the development of painting, sculpture, and architecture in the grand manner. In such a country there can be no great centers of population, no vast accumulations of wealth, no extensive paraphernalia of schools, galleries, and museums. Political circumstances also have been unfavorable to the development of art in Switzerland. From the fifteenth century to the Reformation the country did indeed contribute more than its share to the painting of the time; and while Holbein cannot be claimed as a son of the soil, nevertheless the rich city of Basel became his home and the scene of his greatest achievements. Protestantism, however, by abolishing church pictures and pious allegories, destroyed one of the greatest sources of art support, as a result of which it languished for two centuries. And always, of course, the essential democracy of the people made it impossible for Swiss painters and sculptors to find employment at home under the patronage of great noblemen and monarchs. Under such circumstances it is not strange that Switzerland developed no specific national art.

During the long penumbra which followed the Reformation nearly all the artists of Switzerland were forced to become emigrants to Italy, France, and Germany. Jean Petitot, the famous enamelist of the seventeenth century; the Liotard brothers and Füssli in the eighteenth; and many others were among the number of gifted expatriates. But it was from what is now the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino that an emigration of artists upon an unprecedented scale took place. It began much earlier than the Reformation. Adamo of Arogno and Dono of Bissono left their native mountain valleys for Italy in the thirteenth century. Later, whole families of skilled masons and architects distinguished themselves by grandiose achievements in Venice, Florence, and Rome. It is difficult to determine whether they should be credited to the history of Swiss or of Italian art; nevertheless, the indebtedness of the latter is unquestionably great to the Solari of Carona, the Rodari of

Maroggia, the Gaggini of Bissone, the Fontana of Melide, and the Maderno of Capolago—all of Ticinese origin. And these were but the leaders among many: the historian Wyss, who devoted himself particularly to the study of the southernmost canton during the eighteenth century, names more than seventy architects born on its soil who attained fame in Italy. Coming down to more recent times, the sculptor Vincenzo Vela (1820–91) was born and learned the trade of stonecutter in the little village of Ligornetto, near Mendrisio. Although Vela owed his artistic education and career to Milan and Rome, he was so fiery a patriot that he returned to Switzerland to fight in the war of the Sonderbund. A collection of casts of his works, together with a few originals which he presented to the federal government, are exhibited to the public in the former *atelier* of the great sculptor at Ligornetto.

At long last toward the end of the eighteenth century the art of painting began again to strike root in Swiss soil. From the earliest times Swiss pictures could usually be identified by the conventionalized and unreal chain of snow-clad Alps which formed their background. Now arose a group of great mountain painters: Hess, De la Rive, Diday, Calame, Berthoud, and the De Meurons. With the nineteenth century, Barthélemy Menn (1815–93) became the central figure in the art life of the country. Among his pupils were Böcklin, the weird caricaturist of Greek myths; Simon, painter of the diligence; and Charles Giron, whose colossal *chef-d'œuvre*, the "Cradle of the Confederation," hangs in the chamber of the National Council at Bern.

Greatest of the pupils of Menn was Ferdinand Hodler (1853–1918), a genuine Swiss master, perhaps indeed the first great master that the country has produced.[1] Hodler was born in Bern under circumstances of dire poverty, his whole life was a struggle first for bread, then for recognition, of which latter, by the way, he got much less during his lifetime from compatriots than from foreigners. Geneva, where most of his work was done, in particular found it hard to accept his *rudesse bernoise et sa brutalité.* Rudeness and brutality there are, indeed, in much that Hodler did, but it is precisely these qualities which in his battle pieces recreate the fighting centuries of Swiss history in all their glory and shame. There is no mistaking the gnarled bodies of his warriors, firmly planted, tremendously muscled, they are Swiss to the marrow and could be nothing else. In Hodler's symbolic paintings and in certain of his landscapes there is a softer note, but the challenge of stark force, which so offended his contemporaries, is seldom concealed.

---

[1] An excellent brief account of Hodler's life and work is presented in Ewald Bender, *Das Leben Ferdinand Hodlers* (Zürich: Rascher, 1921).

It was his fundamental quality in life as in art, characterizing his political thinking to such an extent that, although of Teutonic blood, he did not hesitate to denounce Germany during the World War. Late in the life of the master tardy recognition began to come to him from his fellow-citizens; and now that he is gone, leaving a great void behind him, the galleries of the country are making every effort to bring his canvases together. In all collections open to the public the Hodlers attract by far the largest share of attention.

One other modern, Giovanni Segantini (1858–99), Italian by birth but Swiss in spirit and by adoption, deserves special mention.[2] Like Hodler, his childhood was one of extreme poverty; unlike him, however, he found early recognition and patronage. Segantini is the greatest of all painters of the Alpine world, but he portrays more than the mountains of the Upper Engadine in the heart of which he set up his *atelier*. Against this glorified background of endless peaks and snow fields, fused into its very substance as it were, he paints the spirit of the soil, of the peasants and their "poor earth-born companions and fellow-mortals"—the beasts of the field—who spring from it, live with it, and in death return to it. At St. Moritz, within sight of the mountains he knew and loved so well, a shrine has been erected in memory of Segantini, which is fast becoming a favorite place of pilgrimage to the art-lovers of Switzerland. In addition to his pictures and drawings it shelters his greatest work, a work as wide as life itself, the triptych, "*Werden, Sein, Vergehen*" ("Becoming, Being, Passing Away").

Since the time of Hodler and Segantini, Switzerland has become the permanent home of great numbers of painters and graphic artists. Geneva is the center of a colony in the west which exploits the soft beauties of its lake and the stern fastnesses of the Valaisan hinterland. In Basel a number of distinguished painters have taken up their residence, and their efforts are encouraged by the city which appropriates considerable sums each year in commissions, competitions, and purchases. Zürich and the picturesque outlying villages along the shores of the lake harbor perhaps the largest colony of painters and graphic artists in the country. The old reproach that the artists of Switzerland were born only to become emigrants no longer holds.

In the matter of picture galleries and museums also much has been achieved during the last few decades. Of course, Switzerland possesses no collections comparable to those of the larger countries of Europe. Nevertheless, the galleries of four of her cities are rich in the work of local painters. As such they have begun to attract a lively popular interest which is not without a marked element of national pride. The art museums of Bern and Zürich contain much of Hodler's best work, to which additions are constantly being made.[3] At Geneva there is a good historical collection, particularly of the paintings of Barthélemy Menn and his pupils. The art museum at Basel is world-famous because of its Holbeins. It possesses also a notable Böcklin room, and many pictures by contemporaries of the latter, one of which, the "Village Politicians" by Max Buri, is *genre* at its best and Swiss to the core. While less rich in paintings than neighboring countries, Switzerland possesses several splendid collections of antiquities: armor, furniture, painted glass, and costumes, all of which are full of artistic interest. The greatest of these is to be found in the National Museum in Zürich, which has been particularly successful in removing bodily whole rooms from various medieval and Renaissance buildings. Of recent years a new impetus has been given to art in Switzerland by the Gottfried Keller Stiftung. This foundation, named in honor of the poet, uses the large privately contributed fund at its disposal to purchase the works of Swiss or foreign masters, which are then distributed among the principal galleries of the country.[4]

---

[2] A short account of his life and work may be found in Gottardo Segantini, *Giovanni Segantini und das Segantini Museum in St. Moritz* (Milan, 1925).

Modest as are the claims to eminence in the higher forms of art which may be made for the Swiss, there are humbler fields in which they hold an exceptional position. Few peoples have been richer in carvers of wood, stone, and metal—many of them peasants by vocation but none the less of rare skill in their avocations. The cultivation of these indigenous and essentially democratic forms of art goes back to a remote antiquity, if, indeed, it is not of prehistoric origin. "On the lids of boxes made today in the Valais we find incised figures of chamois that in their schematic intensity of movement recall the beasts which the reindeer hunters scratched on the bones of their victims."[5] Out of these homely arts, dating from the first conscious and considered contact of man with nature, there was developed in the course of time that typical Alpine abode, the châlet or Swiss cottage, which, as Ruskin remarks, is "beautifully national." "There is nothing to be found the least like it in any other country; the moment a glimpse is caught of its projecting galleries, one knows that it is the land of Winkelried and Tell."[6] Differing from canton to canton in material, style, adornment, and furniture, these staunch peasant homes are perfectly adapted to meet the needs of agricultural life and the stress of varying climates; nor is it often that they fail to achieve simple and dignified beauty, especially when mellowed by age.

---

[3] Cf. W. Wartmann, *Hodler in Zürich* (published by the Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, 1919).

[4] The five members of the Gottfried Keller Foundation are appointed for a term of three years by the Federal Council, and their activities are subject to the supervision of the latter and particularly of the Department of the Interior. Although named in honor of the poet, the fund which the Foundation administers was the gift of Frau Lydia Welti-Escher.

[5] Daniel Baud-Bovy in F. Muirhead, *Switzerland,* p. 29.

Artistic skill is not confined to the rural population of Switzerland; on the contrary, it exists to a surprising degree among the masses of city workmen. Upon this broad foundation rests in large part the success of the important industries producing fine textiles, embroideries, jewelry, and watches.

One form of art, if it may be called such—that of the political poster—is of extremely late development in Switzerland. Down to the time of the World War campaign advertising was used sparingly, taking the form of lists of candidates supplemented with a few catch phrases, or of rather long-winded arguments printed in large type for display on walls or hoardings. In general these devices were less effective than handbills or newspaper announcements. The revolution in Germany brought forth an outpouring of colorful posters many of which found their way across the frontier and attracted wide interest among the Swiss. Shortly thereafter the introduction of proportional representation forced each of the political parties of the country to cast about for new methods of popular appeal. The result was a chromatic outburst of political posters in the 1919 election for the National Council, the first to be held under the new system. Almost overnight the "picture gallery of the street" became a feature of Swiss party strife.

Posters have also been used largely in initiative and referendum campaigns, notably in connection with the federal direct tax bill of 1918, the proposal to enter the League of Nations in 1920, the votes on Woman Suffrage in Basel and Zürich of the same year, the capital tax levy of 1922, and the abolition of the grain monopoly in 1926.[7]

In sharp contrast with the general absence of invective and bitterness in Swiss campaigning, most of their political posters are strong, not to say brutal, in conception. Exaggerated, grotesque, humorous, satiric, malicious or sentimental, however, the best of them are always simple to an extreme. They run to sharp outlines, vivid colors, and the briefest possible statements in heavy type of the idea to be conveyed. Effective appeal is made in particular to the sentiment of caution which is perhaps the deepest trait of Swiss political psychology. Bolsheviki are portrayed with brutal criminal faces and drawn revolvers threatening passers-by on the quiet streets. From the same hoarding bloated capitalists, perched upon immense money bags, gaze with vulpine leer upon the pedestrian throng. No doubt these artistic "shockers" are not without effect, but in sober tolerant Switzerland they give the impression of being decidedly out of place. In fairness it should be added that some few cartoonists seek to make votes by the favorable presentation of their own cause rather than by the vilification of the opposition.

---

[6] From an essay on "The Mountain Cottage in Switzerland," in his *Complete Works,* I, 30.

[7] A very interesting collection, chiefly of the posters of the 1919 election, is presented in Edwin Lüthy, *Das Künstlerische politische Plakat in der Schweiz* (Basel: Helbing u. Lichtenhahn, 1920).

MUSIC

Love of drama is widespread among the Swiss, but love of music and song is well-nigh universal. In both arts they may lay claim to be considered innovators. The open-air play *(Freilichtspiel)*, as we shall soon have occasion to note, has recently taken a peculiar and extensive development in Switzerland. Even more redolent of the soil are the typical musical forms of yodeling, the alphorn, and herdsmen's melodies *(Kühreihen)*. All of these are ancient; indeed, there are charming folk tales accounting for the origins of yodeling and of the alphorn.[8] According to these veracious sources, the former is an art of supernatural origin, having been taught first to mankind by ghostly herdsmen of the high mountain meadows. The alphorn, which runs to portentous length and has a prodigious range of sound, is said to have been invented by a shepherd lover in order that he might communicate by music with his sweetheart in a distant valley. Whatever truth there may be in these guileless tales, certain it is that both yodeling and the alphorn are natural products of isolated and lonely mountain life.

Mindful of the achievements of their countrymen in higher realms of music, educated Swiss are somewhat inclined to deprecate the prominence given to native forms of melody. To them the latter are rather commonplace, scarcely worth mention in the same breath with the highly developed choruses and orchestral music in which they delight. Nevertheless, wherever they may travel in foreign lands they are certain to encounter the simpering entreaty: "You are Swiss; of course you know how to yodel?" Some resentment on their part, courteously concealed, of course, is only natural, considering the implied assumptions that yodeling is the only form of music of which they are capable; that, in fact, all Swiss are still simple herdsmen, nothing more.

---

[8] Cf. H. Herzog, *Schweizersagen für Jung und Alt dargestellt*, pp. 8, 10.

Perhaps yodeling has been overemphasized abroad; certainly it is regarded the world around as the peculiarly Alpine type of vocalization. However, in spite of the somewhat jaundiced eye with which it is viewed by Swiss intelligentsia, it continues to enjoy the undiminished favor of the masses. There can be no doubt, moreover, that native forms of music, which in Switzerland include not only yodeling but folk songs almost without number, do much more to form the popular spirit and to preserve local peculiarities than all the compositions of the great masters. With this view in mind a national organization of yodelers has been formed *(der schweizerische Jodlerverband)*, which has already given two annual festivals. The second of these events, held at Luzern, July 30 and 31, 1927, attracted companies of competing singers and alphorn players from a number of neighboring cantons. As usual on such occasions, the presence of large numbers of women wearing peasant costumes contributed greatly to the color and vivacity of the occasion. In some quarters, however, the affair was criticized on the ground that it was conceived, in part at least, as a tourist attraction.

Many of the earlier Swiss folk songs date back to the Middle Ages. Some of them celebrated the deeds of heroes; some were used in dances on the village green; still others, in spite of the disfavor of church authorities, were love songs pure and simple. With the rise of the citizen class (1350–1500), folk songs reached their highest development, falling later into comparative neglect. There was a revival of interest during the seventeenth century, chiefly in the form of songs for social occasions. Since the eighteenth century they have been rediscovered, developed, and are now generally recognized as a national treasure of inestimable richness. While sharing many of the features of the general mass of German folk songs, those of Swiss origin are distinguished by the impress of a mountain environment. Loneliness and a sense of the ruthless power of elementary forces, a deeply reflective attitude toward life and the universe, a simple, reverential submission to the will of God coupled with the conviction that under divine leadership the people must forge its own fate—such are the characteristics of Swiss popular poetry.[9] Like other products of the spirit of the people (myths, legends, open-air plays), the folk song contributes quite as much to local as to national sentiment. Often the themes dealt with refer to the history of a canton or a commune. Folk songs in general, including the verses sung to herdsmen's melodies or designed to be accompanied by yodeling, are also written frequently in dialect, a fact which limits the range of their appeal but greatly increases their homeliness and the affection in which they are held.[10]

---

[9] Otto von Greyerz, *Das Volkslied der deutschen Schweiz* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1927).

By neighborhood tradition, by instruction in the schools, and by the practice of innumerable singing societies the music of folk songs is widely known. One Swiss with a memory full of verses and an accordion or concertina is a host in himself, no matter how lonely may be his hut. When two or three of these kindred souls are gathered together there is a long and rousing evening's concert. The popularity of the folk song is shown by the number of collections constantly issuing from the press, a few representing considerable scholarly research, the greater number, however, being cheap editions containing the words only of all the favorite selections.[11]

A conception of the extent of this form of poetic and musical expression as popularly practiced in Switzerland is afforded by the *Alpenrösli*, a book of songs for general use, the eighth edition of which appeared in 1913. It contains 587 songs, nearly all in German, divided into (1) "Songs of the Fatherland, of Freedom, and of the Alps, and Herdsmen's Melodies"; (2) "Popular Songs and Songs for Social Occasions"; (3) "Songs of War and Soldier Life"; (4) "Students', Gymnasts', Hunters', and Riflemen's Songs"; (5) "Drinking Songs, Songs of Farewell, and of Wandering Life"; (6) "Songs of Love and Longing"; (7) "Various." The first of these groupings only is drawn exclusively from Swiss sources, but it contains no fewer than 180 pieces, of which fully a hundred are purely patriotic in character.

Among them, of course, is the national hymn, "Dem Vaterland," by Johann Rudolf Wyss (1781–1830), which is sung to the same tune as "God Save the King":

Rufst du mein Vaterland,
Sieh uns mit Herz und Hand,
All dir geweiht.

It is, however, far inferior in poetic quality to Gottfried Keller's "An mein Vaterland," which is sung even more frequently on public occasions:

---

[10] Two sets of verses in Bernese dialect for the *Kühreihen* are presented in G. J. Kuhn, *Volkslieder und Gedichte*, pp. 56, 74.

[11] Among recent collections are the *Röseligarte* of Greyerz, and the *Juhui* of Glassmann.

O mein Heimatland! O mein Vaterland!
Wie so innig, feurig lieb ich dich!

. . . .

Als ich arm, doch froh, fremdes Land durchstrich,
Königsglanz mit deinen Bergen mass,
Thronenflitter bald um dich vergass:
Wie war da der Bettler stolz auf dich!

There is a rythm and swing to the Romance "Roulez tambours," which make it one of the finest of the world's marching tunes; nor are the words less inspiring:

Roulez tambours! pour couvrir la frontière,
Battez gaîement une marche guerrière
Dans nos cantons chaque enfant naît soldat.
C'est le grand cœur qui fait les braves.

It has often been remarked that of all immigrants in foreign lands the Swiss are most inclined to homesickness. Many of the beautiful patriotic lyrics which the country possesses were written on alien soil and express this feeling with such poignancy that they have become universal favorites.

Reference has already been made to the Swiss Association for the Preservation of Costumes and the Cultivation of Folk Songs, which was formed at Luzern in 1926. So far as its second aim is concerned, the Association purposes to build upon the collections of folk songs already in existence. It is convinced, however, that further research in certain parts of the country will bring to light many half-forgotten treasures of popular music. The Association is interested further in old dances and festival plays. In a recent public announcement the patriotic appeal of the movement is emphasized, as follows:

> It is precisely by true popular festivals with their innocent mirth and contagious joyousness that love of homeland may be extraordinarily strengthened throughout wide circles of the people, and—most important of all—in our younger generation. . . . . If we can succeed in bringing together young and old, rich and poor, wise and simple, we will serve the high purpose of strengthening our national feeling and at the same time will ennoble our popular festivals which must never be allowed to degenerate into rowdyism.[12]

Among the cults of the Swiss, already noted, one of the most important, even from a political viewpoint, is that of music. A close network of organizations covers the whole country, and the singing societies and orchestral associations which make it up enjoy a well-deserved fame. To a considerable degree the latter must be credited to the highly competent directors and composers who, since the days of "Sängervater" Johann Georg Nägeli, who died in 1836, have devoted themselves to the development of the Swiss *Lied.* Just as in the case of open-air plays, however, it is obvious that a large share of praise must be accorded to the passion of the masses for music and to the willing co-operation of thousands of singers and players drawn from all parts of the country. The orchestras of Zürich, Basel, Bern, and St. Gallen contribute much to the higher musical life of the country, and among their recent and present directors are a number of men who have won international recognition as composers. Also in Switzerland festival plays have been developed to a high degree of popularity and artistic effectiveness. They demand music of a peculiar type, and this local demand has been met wholly by local supply. In the latter field Swiss composers are solving, with eminent success, a problem peculiar to their country.

---

[12] *Der Staatsbürger,* 11. Jhrg., Nr. 2 (January 16, 1927), S. 13.

DRAMA—OPEN-AIR PLAYS

It is in the form of dramatic presentations, particularly in open-air plays *(Freilichtspiele)*, also known as national or festival plays *(Heimatspiele, Festspiele)*, that Swiss symbolism reaches its highest development. During the Middle Ages, and even so late as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, other European nations were equally given to popular theatrical expression; but with increasing centralization and industrialization the festivals and plays that made up so large and colorful a part of the earlier life of the people were abandoned. Favored by inaccessibility and by the resultant strong love of locality and local custom, the Swiss perpetuated them from generation to generation. Undoubtedly, another factor helped to preserve the old traditions in the Alpine republic, namely, the natural dramatic talent shared apparently by persons in all walks of life. In the veins of every Swiss, it has been said, there flows *ein gewisses Theaterblut* ("a certain theater blood"). No one who has watched an open-air play, given, it may be, by simple peasants and village tradesmen, can doubt the existence of this trait. It is noteworthy that one inn at least in every Swiss town, no matter how small or remote that town may be, is sure to have a diminutive stage and hall, the scene of innumerable minor productions by local Thespians. With such a people and such a background it is easy to understand the remarkable development recently made by the open-air theater in Switzerland.

Of all Swiss dramatic offerings, out of doors or in, the great Festival of the Winegrowers at Vevey alone is commented upon extensively by foreign critics and press. The Tell Play at Altdorf attracts some attention abroad and, of course, is regarded as a national institution in Switzerland. However, the outside world knows next to nothing of the innumerable open-air plays that are constantly being given throughout the country, often in ancient little towns far off the main roads of travel. Taken in the aggregate, however, it is these small and unobtrusive productions that make the deepest impression upon the hearts and minds of the Swiss people.

Greatest of all Swiss dramatic efforts, the Festival of the Winegrowers at Vevey owes its origin to the ancient Abbey of Agriculture, a local association rebaptised later as the Laudable Brotherhood of St. Urban. With true catholic spirit the laudable brothers are said to have recognized the pagan Bacchus equally with the Christian saint as their patron. Tradition has it that the beginnings of the Veveysan organization may be traced as far back as the twelfth century; in any event, it possesses archives dating from the sixteenth century. More than a hundred years ago the Laudable Brotherhood became simply the Brotherhood of Winegrowers, under which name it still exists and has become internationally famous.[13]

From remote times it was the custom of the confraternity at Vevey to bestow prizes upon the most successful winegrowers of the vicinage. The simple exercises of presentation gradually took on accretions of ceremony, becoming parades in 1651, veritable pageants in 1730, and allegorical representations on a grand scale during the nineteenth century.

Spectacles of imposing size and magnificence make, of course, almost impossible demands upon the resources of a small city like Vevey (13,000 inhabitants), even with all the help which fellow-citizens of Canton Vaud so cheerfully contribute. Accordingly they are offered only every twenty or twenty-five years. The last presentation prior to 1927 occurred in 1905, when more than 100,000 visitors were attracted to Vevey. For the festival of 1927 there was erected in the spacious Place du Marché a temporary stadium providing 15,000 seats, all of which were sold out at each of the six performances. Two thousand figurants took part, and music was supplied by five bands with 300 players all together, an orchestra of 150 pieces, and a chorus of 300 singers. The libretto of 1927 was the work of a Genevese poet,

---

[13] Édouard Rod, the famous novelist of Romance Switzerland, contributed an excellent historical sketch of the Festival of the Vineyardists to the *Revue des deux mondes,* of June, 1905.

M. Pierre Girard. For the second time M. Gustave Doret of Vevey acted as composer and musical director.

It is difficult to avoid superlatives in describing a spectacle so magnificent as the 1927 Festival of the Vineyardists. Even foreign critics representing the principal European journals fell under its spell and awarded it praise of the highest order. "Two thousand figurants in multi-colored costumes mass themselves in the arena, and while a procession representing one of the four seasons of the year defiles in the foreground, the other players do not cease to furnish a background of decoration, communicating to the whole by continual movements and changes the diversity of life itself. Invocations, processions, songs, dances, ballets—the Festival of the Vineyardists is a medley of poetry, of music, and of color. It is a hymn to labor and to peace."[14]

Another critic describes the Festival as "an impossible synthesis of Hellas, of Helvetia, and of rustic labor." True it is that scenes and costumes are drawn as freely from the ancient pagan world as from the Pays de Vaud of the eighteenth and earlier centuries. By dint of many rehearsals and repetitions, however, the gods and goddesses of Greece —Bacchus and Silenus, Ceres and Pallas—are said to have become naturalized citizens of the canton, neighbors familiar to all the inhabitants thereof. Hobnobbing with these divine personages there appear upon the spacious arena stalwart bearers of gorgeous medieval banners of the Zodiac, gossamer-clad wood nymphs, grave wine-growers and jovial wine-pressers, fauns and bacchantes, yodlers in quaint Alpine garb, graceful *corps de ballet*, ancient Greek flower-bearers, warlike companies of pikemen, mowers, hay-makers, harvesters, vintagers, woodcutters, hunters, fishermen, blacksmiths, and basket-makers. Troops of children clad in peasant garb march sedately among their elders. One of them, a boy of fourteen, dressed as a goatherd and standing alone in the center of the immense arena, achieved the most conspicuous success of the Festival with his *Chanson du chevrier*. A peasant bridal couple appear in the procession accompanied by maids of honor wearing the traditional costumes of all the cantons. Herds of oxen, sheep, and goats are marshaled by shepherds and shepherdesses; ancient agricultural implements are swung in rhythmic dances mimicking the labor of the fields. Incongruity is further enhanced by the frowning medieval fortress, reminiscent of Morat, which forms the back-scene of the arena. Nevertheless, out of such multiple and diverse elements the people of Vaud have learned by centuries of experimentation to evolve a harmonious unity of purest beauty.

---

[14] Henry Bordeaux, "La Fête des Vignerons," in *Illustration*, August 6, 1927.

The Festival of the Vineyardists differs from all the other open-air plays of Switzerland not only in its incomparably greater size and magnificence but also in that it is not connected with some definite event or period in local annals, being rather of a general and allegorical character. For the latter reason it does not so directly cultivate historic interest or instil national sentiment. Indeed, it goes deeper than purely national sentiment. Drawing inspiration both from old Greek mythology and from the cultivation of the soil under the march of the four seasons, it teaches with sublime effect the patriotism of love both of nature and of native land. Framed in the landscape and impregnated with the traditions of Vaud, the Festival of the Vineyardists makes a profound appeal first, of course, to the Romance cantons and then, in a slightly less degree only, to the rest of the country. Great as are the contributions of poets, composers, and musical directors to the success of the Festival, its fame rests to an even greater degree upon the fact that it is a truly democratic product—the work of the people of Vaud dedicated to the people of Switzerland. And the whole Swiss people regard it with just pride as a supremely beautiful interpretation of their land and life and labor. In that sense the Festival may be regarded as a national achievement, teaching the Swiss conception of nationalism as devoted to peace and industry.

It is not too much to say that the writing of *Wilhelm Tell* won for Friedrich Schiller the undying love of the whole Swiss people. Great as is the admiration for the German poet in his own country, it has become a veritable cult in the four forest states clustered about the Lake of Luzern, where, according to tradition, the deeds immortalized in the play were enacted. As one evidence of the peculiar affection felt for Schiller by the people of the original cantons, a massive granite block rising abruptly from the waters of the lake near Brunnen bears the inscription in golden letters: "*Dem Sänger Tells, Friedrich Schiller, die Urkantone.*" An even better tribute is the production of *Wilhelm Tell* every few years at Altdorf, within a stone's throw of the spot where the hero shot the apple from his boy's head and defied the tyrant Gessler. In the market square of the old town a colossal bronze statue of Tell by Kieselinger was itself dedicated in 1895 by the production of a strikingly beautiful original *Festakt* written by the poet Arnold Ott. Altdorf, of course, had always been sacred soil to the Swiss; but since the presentations of Schiller's play were begun there in 1899, large and ever larger crowds of patriotic pilgrims from all parts of the country have invaded the sleepy little cantonal capital of Uri. At present the Tell drama is not presented in the open air. Some years ago a sum was raised by the sale of lottery tickets throughout Switzerland sufficient to build in Altdorf a handsome theater designed solely for the presentation of this one play. The theater has an exceptionally large stage and contains 1,000 seats. During the summer of 1927 nine Sunday presentations of *Wilhelm Tell* were given and two on Saturdays. Tickets were sold to school children at reduced rates, as is customary generally in Switzerland with plays of a historical or patriotic character.

All the actors and actresses of the Tell play are citizens of Altdorf and vicinity—shopkeepers, butchers, bakers, artisans, hotel-keepers, and their wives and daughters. Experts take charge of the artistic direction, scenery, and music; and with their assistance a performance, not so finished perhaps as that of professional actors but full of enthusiasm, life, and passion, is achieved. While the players are amateurs, it is also true that most of them have had rôles from lesser to greater in the Tell play since childhood, until it has become second nature to them. Part of their artistic success is due also to the spirit of the place, and much of it to the knowledge that they themselves are descendants of the men of Uri who centuries ago freed themselves from the rule of mighty princes. "Many a one who appears upon the stage at Altdorf feels not only a holy zeal for a great cause but shows by a strong gnarled exterior, by heavy tread and weighty demeanor, an inheritance from the old confederates; and these tokens of his descent help more than mimic art toward the success of the play."[15]

It is not so much within the walls of theaters nor in colossal but infrequent productions such as the Festival of the Vineyardists at Vevey that the dramatic impulses of the Swiss people find their most characteristic expression. Rather it is in the simple but unpretentious open-air plays which have been presented by towns and villages throughout the country since the time of the mysteries of the Middle Ages. As one example may be mentioned the original Tell play written and produced in Uri long before the printing press was invented. Naïve, powerful and vivid, the popularity of this piece is proved by the numerous editions published between 1511 and 1765.[16] At the present time open-air plays are constantly being offered, frequently in the most unlooked-for and out-of-the-way places. Thus, of recent years such presentations have been given at Pfäffikon, Einsiedeln, Burgdorf, Hertenstein, and Morshach; at Dietschiberg above Luzern, and at Wiedikon-Zürich. In the canton of Schaffhausen a number of small villages, among them Eglisau, Diessenhofen, and Stein-am-Rhein, take turns in presenting original plays dealing with important events in local history. During the summer of 1929, Rapperswil celebrated in the presence of the higher cantonal authorities of St. Gallen and an immense concourse of visitors drawn from the neighborhood, the seven hundredth anniversary of its foundation, presenting a drama by Linus Bircher, the twelve acts of which reviewed all the more important happenings in the annals of the little town. Mézières above Lausanne in the Romance canton of Vaud is famous for its peasant players, who have produced, among other pieces, a *Guillaume Tell* by the Morax brothers. At the foot of the Dent du Midi the tiny village of Champéry presents a Valaisan peasant wedding of the eighteenth century. Geneva celebrates a festival of youth and joy, featuring mimes and dances according to the formulas of Jacques Dalcroze. Apparently few of the more ancient towns in Switzerland are without dramatic organizations eager to recreate from time to time the glories and sorrows of the past. Lack of adequate theater and stage facilities is no deterrent, an old market square with patrician or guild houses and perchance a clock tower; an old ivied wall or gateway with a distant prospect of river, lake, or mountain, serve as background. Decked out by a minimum of painted scenery, fronted by tier on tier of rough board benches, the physical properties are easily provided.

---

[15] Ernst Zahn, *Der Vierwaldstätter See* (Bielefeld, Velhagen u. Klasing, 1927), p. 11.

[16] Recently reissued by the Verlag Gebrüder Fretz, Zürich, under the title, *Ein hübsch Spiel, gehalten zu Ury in der Eydgnossschafft von Wilhelm Thellen ihrem Landmann und ersten Eydgnossen.*

If funds permit, it is customary for such towns to invite a dramatist of note to write an original play for any festal occasion. In the aggregate such pieces form no inconsiderable part of contemporary Swiss literature. That these national plays represent a dramatic form of peculiar type is recognized by critics, who give considerable attention to the problems of the open-air stage *(Festspielprobleme)* as contrasted with those of the *Kunstbühne* or indoor-theater stage. Many pieces of the former type, indeed, are of extraordinary merit, combining historical accuracy, poetic diction, and high dramatic power. Considering the small monetary returns—if, indeed, a deficit is escaped—and the unlikelihood that the plays will be produced elsewhere, the artistic results achieved are truly remarkable. Yet poetic talent and enthusiasm of a high order are enlisted—witness the career of the late Arnold Ott, whose work in connection with the Schaffhausen centenary of 1901 has been referred to already.[17] As much attention is given to the composition of the original music for an open-air play as to the text of the play itself. Formerly it was customary in Switzerland to

[17] Eduard Haug, *Arnold Ott* (Zürich: Rascher, 1924).

look somewhat askance at such efforts. More recently the work of Hermann Suter, Hermann Wehrli, Gustave Doret, E. Jacques Dalcroze, Joseph Lauber, and Otto Barblan have lifted musical compositions of this peculiar type to the realms of a pure art.

With the text and music of an open-air play in hand, expert directors are chosen to paint the scenery and train the actors—all of the latter, as at Vevey and Altdorf, being amateurs. Close attention is given to historical accuracy, particularly as regards costuming. Switzerland is fortunate in possessing a large number of historical museums, some of them located in the smaller cantonal capitals, which are rich in collections of ancient armor, banners, and trappings, of furniture and of the dress worn by all classes of the population in former ages. With authentic models thus made familiar to the present generation, few errors of outfitting are to be noted even in the humblest of village presentations.

To describe the manifold offerings of Swiss open-air dramatists is out of the question here. It may suffice to present a few details with regard to a typical instance, the play *Brothers*, produced at Eglisau on six Sunday and six Saturday afternoons of the summer of 1927. Performances on two of the latter days were reserved at nominal prices for school children. Eglisau, be it noted, is a village of some 1,500 inhabitants on the Rhine, an hour's ride by train from Zürich, the nearest large city. Yet it provided the 250 players who had parts in *Brothers;* utilizing the court of the former Landvogt's castle as a background, it constructed a stage of ample dimensions for scenes crowded with knights, men-at-arms, peasants, monks, women and children of all classes; it erected in the open air a sloping auditorium seating 2,000 persons; and it entertained hospitably the crowds which pressed into it every Saturday and Sunday for six weeks.

The play itself, three acts in iambic pentameter, part rhymed, part blank verse, by Heinrich Vogel, is based in part upon motifs drawn from Konrad Uhler's romance *Das steinerne Kreuz.*[18] It aims to present a picture, as true and free from confessional prejudice as possible, of the Swiss Reformation years 1527–31. The intense antagonisms of that period, economic and social as well as religious, divided the confederation into two warring camps and culminated in the bloody second Kappel war. Within the cantons class fought against class; and, after the fashion of civil wars generally, families divided and brothers were arrayed against brothers. Resting upon one such instance of fraternal antagonism, the play does succeed admirably in portraying the dissentions of the times with all their ramifications.

[18] The text of the play was published by Steinemann-Scheucher, Bülach.

As the introduction to *Brüder* makes clear, however, it was the purpose of the dramatist not only to present a picture of Reformation dissentions but to point a moral as well, namely, "to advocate the religion of love as against the struggle of confessions, to denounce all wars fundamentally, and to do something for bitterly needed peace." From this aspect it would be difficult to conceive any more effective teaching in favor of toleration and pacifism than the Eglisau festival play. In spite of the tragic earnestness characterizing most of the action of *Brüder*, enough of comic relief is supplied in the conversation of men-at-arms, bailiffs, servants, and messengers. Thus one of the latter is made to remark:

> When two, spurred on by churchly hates
> Fall out and break each others' pates,
> Be sure the devil squats between,
> As laughing third he enjoys the scene.

In a more serious vein the play inculcates the duty of respecting the beliefs of others at every turn. With equal effectiveness the horror and folly of war is preached throughout. In particular, civil wars are denounced as wars between brothers; yet the dramatist recognizes that all wars partake of this character since they array men who are brothers in common humanity against each other. Even the children, who with sixteenth century games and songs appeared in considerable numbers upon the Eglisau stage, are made to express their horror that confederates should be fighting against confederates. At the climax of the third act Heinrich zur Eich, the young hero, returning with broken sword and wounded unto death from the fateful field of Kappel, expires in the presence of his father and uncle—the enemy brothers of the play—of whom he was the only descendant and heir. Their reconciliation follows, of course, while Rosine Escher, the promised bride of Heinrich, breaks into passionate outcry against all war.

Considering that all actors in the Eglisau play were simple townsmen and peasants, it was executed with tremendous effect. For the time being the participants were their own ancestors, whose costumes and armor they wore. It is impossible for one not a Swiss to say which affected the audience more deeply, the historic picture or the ethical lesson conveyed by the play. That the former vividly recreated the life of the town at one of its most critical moments is beyond question. No doubt the maxims of peace and tolerance placed in the mouths of early sixteenth-century characters were anachronistic. Certainly, however, they did not fail of their effect upon hearers whose country had so recently been for four years a small enclave surrounded by great warring powers. One of the peculiarities of the open air as contrasted with the indoor stage is the relatively much greater size of the former, permitting the appearance upon it of crowds of soldiers, peasants, traders, and the like. At times such mass effects are overdone; but at least they convey a very lifelike impression of number, variety, color, and motion. Also, one is aware of a close bond of sympathy between the crowd on the stage and the crowd in the auditorium.

Reference was made above to the number of children who appeared in medieval games and dances at Eglisau, as, indeed, they do generally in open-air plays. Typical Swiss youngsters they were, quite as free from self-consciousness and as deeply in earnest as their elders. One can readily imagine the effect produced upon them as future citizens by participation in such historical dramas. Naturally those who take the children's rôles in one generation became the leading actors of the next —hence the excellence, unusual among amateurs, of many of the latter. It is customary, also, for parents and teachers to take children to witness open-air plays, not merely for amusement but for the sake of the historical teaching they convey. While everything possible is done to encourage the attendance of children at such performances, it is worth noting that minors under eighteen years of age are barred from moving-picture theaters by the laws of a number of cantons.

In Roman Catholic sections of Switzerland the dramatic impulses of the people find expression in religious ceremonials and processions as well as plays. During the Middle Ages no European country was more given to Easter plays and later to passion plays. From 1500 to 1627 two hundred such productions took place in German Switzerland alone, but during the seventeenth century they gave way gradually to secular dramas. Nevertheless, the earlier tradition was not wholly forgotten; and in 1893, Selzach, a village of 1,200 inhabitants, in the canton of Solothurn, conceived the bold idea of reviving it. Advantage was taken, of course, of the experiences both of Oberammergau in Bavaria and of Höritz in Czechoslovakia by the ambitious villagers. From the small beginning made by them more than three decades ago there have grown a theater seating 1,200 people and a performance therein every four years of the *Passion Play* which, in spite of the simplicity of the means available, is starkly impressive and beautiful, shot through and through as it is with the fervent piety of the people of Selzach. While, of course, purely religious in appeal, the production is offered "not only to serve God but the fatherland as well, to bring nearer the long-watched-for Promised Land of peace between nations."[19] A naïve but striking illustration of the intermingling of spiritual and secular motives occurred at the final scene of the Selzach *Passion Play,* representing the Ascension of Our Lord. Standing upon the battlements of high heaven, surrounded by white-robed angels, the risen Christ, himself robed in purest white, held in his outstretched hand the Swiss national flag!

---

[19] *Passionspiele, Selzach, 1927, Offizieller Führer,* p. 49.

Even with offerings so divergent as the foregoing, the list of Swiss open-air plays is by no means exhausted. Following a medieval tradition, churches are sometimes used for striking dramatic productions. Thus at Bern during the summer of 1927, the portals of the old minster formed the background for a production, in which professional actors and amateurs united, of Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *The Great World Theater.* Intensely medieval as were the characters and text of the play, it is impossible to conceive any more striking expression of modern communism than the words put into the mouth of the beggar who takes the principal rôle. Basel, also utilizing its cathedral as a background, presents from time to time a play dealing with the ravages of the plague in that city and evoking Hans Holbein's famous "Dance of Death."

It is a striking fact that the Swiss themselves are so habituated to all these forms of dramatic expression, considered merely as such, that they seem scarcely aware of the powerful influence exerted upon the masses of the people by open-air and other national and historical plays. Certainly, however, the latter are prime factors in developing understanding for, and love of, locality, and of the country as a whole. Nowhere else is the drama made to contribute so largely to national and patriotic ends. Perhaps the contribution is all the more effective because hitherto it has been so purely artistic, so wholly without conscious political purpose. More recently the powerful influence of Swiss dramatic presentations in fostering citizenship and the sense of historic continuity has been recognized and encouraged by modest subventions from public and private funds. In a wealthier country there would be danger that too liberal financial support might warp such peculiar theatrical forms, destroying their utility both from the dramatic and the national point of view. Switzerland, however, is too poor to subsidize the open-air theater to death. Moreover, the latter is so modest in its demands, it is so democratic both in the large number of volunteer players and in the immense popular audiences it attracts, it is based so staunchly upon an old and sound tradition, that one may look forward with confidence to its continuance and further successful development for decades to come.

CHAPTER XV

TRADITION AND DEVOTION TO LOCALITY

TRADITION

Knut Hamsun, in his romance *Die letzte Freude*, makes one of his characters remark of the Swiss: "They haven't even a single legend in their country. There they sit, generation after generation, and file away at watch wheels and guide the English up their mountain peaks, but it is a country that is wholly bare of folk songs and legends." The accusation is an old one and oft-repeated. So far as folk songs are concerned, it has been refuted already.[1] How the charge that there are no Swiss legends could ever have been made passes all comprehension except on the assumption of complete ignorance. Yet who can plead ignorance of the Tell legend, which is so frequently quoted in the contemporary political discussions of the Alpine republic that it deserves a chapter to itself? Perhaps, indeed, so much prominence has been given to this one truly national tradition that foreign observers have failed to note the countless local legends to be found in every part of the country.

It is not too much to say that almost every fountain, stream, and lake, every valley and mountain peak, every forest, alp, and glacier in Switzerland figures in some ancient story familiar to the neighborhood. Books retelling these more than twice-told tales issue constantly from the press and are eagerly bought and read, seeming never to lose their popularity.[2] Swiss authors of note frequently draw inspiration from this ancient source; Gottfried Keller's *Spiegel, das Kätzchen*, for example, is a delightful illustration of a homely myth lighted up by the poet's roguish humor. Of course, legends which are merely embalmed in print are dead legends. While books help to preserve them, however, the folk tales of the Swiss have their true existence in word of mouth narration by villagers, peasants, shepherds, and guides. Fathers and mothers tell them to their children; teachers leading troops of pupils on school hikes relate them on the spot; open-air festival plays present them in dramatic form. Poets and song-writers turn them into verse and melody, giving the old sagas a new lease of life on the lips of the people. Political orators and after-dinner speakers never fail to pay homage to the heroic figures of local legend, always with telling effect.

---

[1] See chap. xi.

[2] Among newer books of this character may be cited the admirable collection of *Schweizer Sagen und Heldengeschichten der Jungen erzählt* (16th ed.; Stuttgart: Levy u. Müller), by Meinrad Lienert; the two volumes of *Schweizersagen für Jung und Alt dargestellt* (Aarau: Sauerländer, 1913), by H. Herzog; and a briefer recent reissue of the latter edited by Arnold Büchli.

No doubt Swiss myths owe much of their continuing vogue to the fact that they reflect the soul of the people with mirror-like fidelity. Moreover, they are admirably adapted to teaching purposes because they emphasize those moral and political qualities which are most appreciated popularly—shrewdness, self-reliance, perseverance, honesty, piety, charity, love of liberty, resistance to tyranny. Well known everywhere among the masses of the people, myths and folk tales flourish most luxuriantly, of course, in the higher valley and mountainous districts. To peasants and shepherds they are as familiar as the Bible or the rhymes of local poets. Frankly regarded for the most part as charming fictions, it is nevertheless true that a measure of belief in the old superstitions still persists in certain more remote regions of the country. Natural phenomena of the higher Alpine realm—avalanches, earth-slips, glaciers, eternal snow fields, torrential rains, lightning close at hand, and echoing salvos of thunder, the *Föhn,* weird cloud shapes and shadows, grotesque rock forms seen through swirling, wraithlike mists—all these are terrifying enough to account both for the origin of Swiss myths and for the continuing credence which they find in the minds of simple folk.

Without a knowledge of the legends of the countryside one loses the significance of many a noted landmark, of peculiar customs and observances, of cantonal and communal coats-of-arms, banners, and insignia. Believe it or not, a Landsgemeinde in Uri, having failed twice to construct a bridge over the Reuss in the Gotthard pass, authorized the Landamman of the canton to enter into negotiations to that end with the devil. How the Landamman succeeded not only in getting the bridge built by his satanic majesty but also in neatly defrauding the latter out of his stipulated compensation need not be repeated here. Suffice to say that the ruins of the old Teufelsbrücke are yet to be seen in the deep and frightful defile of the Schöllenen. If this be not enough to convince the most skeptical, a bridge obtained from the devil on the same easy terms is exhibited proudly by the French-speaking population of Chandelin-Savièse above Sion in Canton Valais. A bas-relief above the door of an ancient house hard by the Gross-Münster in Zürich preserves the memory of Kaiser Charlemagne's dealings with a remarkably intelligent serpent on that selfsame spot. On the escutcheon of Canton Uri the bull's head, which so often struck terror into the hearts of the enemies of that fierce mountain people, is accounted for by a thrilling legend involving the sacrifice of a virgin to free the neighboring Surenenalp from a devastating monster.

There were heroes in the Swiss mountains before Tell, and not a few saints. Among the former was the good knight Strutthahn Winkelried, who slew the dragon of Odwyl to the great relief of the people of Unterwalden. At frightful risk to himself, a traveling scholar from the university of Salamanca succeeded in laying the troubled spirit of Pontius Pilate, whose body, according to tradition, had been cast into a lake far up in the fastnesses of the mountain near Luzern which still bears his name. Coming overseas from Ireland, St. Fridolin took up his residence in Glarus when it was still heathen country, and raised his benefactor Urso from the grave to settle a lawsuit about real estate instigated by Landolph, the avaricious brother of Urso. So impressed were the Glarner by this and other marvels accomplished by the holy Fridolin, that they inscribed his image upon their national coat-of-arms, where it may be seen to the present day. Similarly one can account for the foundation of Einsiedeln, beloved of Catholic pilgrims, only by accepting the legend of St. Meinrad, whose two ravens avenged his murder and have been flying ever since upon the flag of the neighboring forest folk.

While many Swiss legends date from Christian times, there are back of them innumerable myths and superstitions of earlier, pagan origin. Curiously contradicting the findings of geology, some of these ancient tales describe a golden age of the Alps, when lush flower-spangled meadows stretched to the very summits of the highest mountain ranges. Glaciers and snow fields, according to these stories, were sent in punishment for the hard-heartedness of the owners of pasture land who oppressed their poor and needy neighbors. Just as the peasants of Brittany believe in towns sunk beneath the waves of the sea, so peasants in some parts of Switzerland tell of villages which, because of their wickedness, were buried deep by avalanches. Curious explanations, evidently of great antiquity, are given of the origins of yodeling and of the herdsmen's melodies *(Kühreihen)*, of certain hunting customs, of the custom of blessing meadows and cattle, and of many other peculiar features of the daily life of various cantons and communes.

There are flower myths and tree myths and all the old familiar animal myths in which bears, wolves, foxes, and serpents are gifted with the power of speech. There are myths of elves and fairies, of water spirits and nixies, of dwarfs who dwell in spacious crystal halls deep in the bowels of the mountains, of werewolves and dragons, of wild hunters accompanied by raging packs of spectral followers, of the "night people" who come out upon the higher meadows with their phantom flocks only after darkness has fallen. There are countless stories of buried treasure guarded by malicious spirits, of men turned to stone because of their wicked deeds. There are grisly tales about vast ghostly hordes of old Frisian warriors which march along well-defined paths from Switzerland to their ancestral North Sea and back again between the hours of twilight and dawn; and woe be unto him who, wittingly or unwittingly, places an obstacle in their path.

Of course, many of these eerie superstitions belong to the great common fund of Teutonic myths, if, indeed, they are not of even earlier origin. In the mouths of Swiss narrators, however, they take on characteristics and turns of phrase peculiar to that country. One of the most noteworthy of these peculiarities is that, while tales have all the misty vagueness of "once upon a time" so far as dates are concerned, they are, as a rule, quite precise as to the place where the happenings transpired. This is true, for example, not only with regard to the comparatively recent Tell legend but also of the much more ancient myths of towns buried beneath avalanches, all of which are named, located, and often described in some detail. For this reason, even if a myth belongs to the general Teutonic stock, it contributes none the less to Swiss love of locality and local spirit.

In this connection something should be said of the enormous mass of traditions developed in Graubünden, the "Thibet of Switzerland." High and remote from civilization the people of that canton lived a life of their own through the generations and the centuries. It has been a few decades only since with the coming of railroads the very qualities of their fascinating country which had so long made it inaccessible contributed to raise it to the front rank of tourist travel. In their earlier isolation it was only natural that Bündners should have developed a wealth of fairy stories and folk lore peculiar to themselves, and probably unsurpassed anywhere. Their high plateau lands and valleys are the habitat of a number of species of familiar spirits bearing strange local names, among them one extremely remarkable race of giants *(die Fänggen)*, which are unknown in other parts of the country. Most of these elvish creatures are so redolent of the Bündner land and so altogether helpful in their relations with human beings that it seems invidious to note a not unrelated fact, namely, that in this canton the persecution of witches began earlier and lasted longer (1432–1753), than anywhere else in Switzerland.[3]

One might go on interminably without exhausting the legendary treasures of the Swiss. Enough has been told perhaps to reveal the fact that the love of the people for mountain, lake, and stream has in it not only pure human delight in natural beauty, but a further element contributed by the romance of countless folk tales. Of the two elements, moreover, the latter is centuries old, the former a thing of the last hundred years. Unquestionably Swiss devotion to locality, which is strongly anchored both in the life of the people and in their decentralized political system, rests to a considerable degree upon the foundation of legends peculiar to the various cantons and communes. To this extent the federal constitution itself has been molded by the pressure of traditions. Moreover, folk tales play no small part in contemporary political discussion. As a figure of speech at least, Swiss idealists often urge that their proposals shall be formulated and sworn to as a new Rütli oath *(Rütlischwur)*.

---

[3] Cf. Dr. M. Schmid and Professor F. Sprecher, *Zur Geschichte der Hexenverfolgungen in Graubünden* (Chur, 1919).

Reference has been made above to the fondness with which political orators quote local legends and to the applause with which their auditors are wont to greet such flights of fancy. In campaign pamphlets also, allusions to folk lore abound; naturally the Tell story is a prime favorite in this connection. Any institution, no matter how recent its origin, which is alleged to stand in opposition to popular rights or to the popular will is certain to be denounced as a "*Zwingburg*," i.e., a fortified castle designed to compel the obedience of the people. Those who favor such an institution are called by their adversaries *Zwingherren* ("tyrannical overlords") or *Vögte* ("bailiffs"), the latter a reference to the agents of Austrian oppression in the thirteenth century. Indeed, the leaders of an unpopular cause may count themselves lucky to escape the most hateful appellation of all—"Gesslers." Quite recently it was used with telling effect against a federal councilor who was held responsible for a proposed initiative measure designed to repress revolutionary agitation and disturbances.

Political nicknames drawn from folk lore are so much a commonplace in Swiss campaigning that they have lost part of their offensiveness. The very frequency of their use, however, is evidence of the extent to which knowledge of tradition is shared by the masses of the people. Of recent decades there has been a tendency, particularly noticeable in the press, to avoid the use of envenomed characterizations of political opponents, whether such characterizations are derived from traditional sources or from the arsenals of contemporary abuse. Nevertheless, exceptions occur, sponsored particularly by the more radical groups. Thus two striking illustrations of the political use or abuse of legendary heroes made their appearance during the campaign of 1922 in the form of pamphlets issued by the Communist party of Switzerland. One of these bore the title: *Arnold Winkelried Is Resur-*

rected. "Although dead since 1386," Winkelried was made to say, "I will once again open a breach for you in the battle order of the master class." This deed accomplished, he advised his fellow-countrymen, among other things, to disarm all citizens paying in taxes more than 6,000 francs annually, to seize all superfluous wealth and use it for old-age, invalidity, and unemployment insurance. A second pamphlet, *William Tell to the Swiss People,* announced the conversion of the latter to the Communist faith. The hero remarked,

> I shot Gessler and yet in Gessler's time things were better than they are now. . . . . You ought to take a new Rütli oath to stand together and drive your masters to the devil. . . . . As to the banks and the money, we will keep them, and also the factories, but we will no longer pay interest on mortgages. . . . . Nowadays you seem to prefer the ballot to the cross-bow. It strikes me as queer that anyone should expect to drive out bailiffs by pieces of paper. Keep on trying it, though. . . . . In my time, however, I carried two arrows in my quiver. And I advise you also to carry another arrow in addition to the ballot.

It will be observed from the foregoing that William Tell is still very much alive in the land he helped set free. Of course, sober Swiss citizens were grossly scandalized that he should be resurrected and quoted in favor of a violent Communist uprising; nevertheless they must admit that their national hero, great as was his provocation, used distinctly forceful methods, in the end resorting to the crime of political assassination. Recently a lively controversy has been waged by specialists on the thirteenth century regarding the actual existence of William Tell. From about 1750 onward, historians generally had dealt with him as a purely legendary figure. Unable to reconcile the two, Swiss schoolbooks frequently present the Tell saga and the recorded facts for the same period side by side, leaving the reader to take his choice—a solution which at least reveals the determination of the populace not to be robbed of their national hero. A recent work by Professor Karl Meyer of the University of Zürich, however, has reopened the whole controversy.[4] By intensive palaeographic research, by a closely reasoned shift of dates, and by the discovery of certain additional facts Professor Meyer reconciles tradition and history, creating a strong presumption that a Tellen-Willi did kill the Vogt Tillendorf, alias Gessler; in any event, it is established that the wife of the latter was made a widow shortly before the end of the year 1291. In an age when common folk had no surnames, the cognomen "Tell" itself may have derived from Tillendorftöter or, more simply, Tillentöter, i.e., "the killer of Tillendorf." The keen interest manifested by educated circles of the Swiss at home and abroad in this somewhat abstruse historical controversy is another evidence of the essential vitality of the Tell story. To the masses of simple folk, of course, the great hero lives regardless of proof; indeed, assuming him to be purely legendary, it may be maintained that the myth is truer than recorded fact, since it originated in and was nourished by the Swiss people's love of liberty and hatred of tyrants.

---

[4] *Die Urschweizer Befreiungstradition* (Zürich: Füssli, 1927). An excellent critical survey of the Tell controversy was presented by M. Marc Peter, minister of Switzerland to the United States and himself a historical scholar of note, before the Swiss Scientific Society of New York, March 7, 1927, published later by the Society under the title, *Über die Entstehung der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft.*

DEVOTION TO LOCALITY

As the discussion of language, literature, and the press and, even more, of ceremonials, cults, holidays, and memorials has already shown repeatedly, Swiss love of locality is developed to an extremely high degree. Indeed, it is doubtful if the citizens of any other country in the world are so deeply impregnated with devotion to natal soil in the most restricted sense of that term. Among themselves they refer continually to two spheres of loyalty, to "the claims of the narrower and of the broader homeland." It is only when they are abroad that they are Swiss simply; at home they make distinctions among themselves—sometimes rather invidiously—according to cantonal origins. A resident of Zürich or St. Gallen, for example, may find himself looked upon as something of a stranger, perhaps even be suspected of German citizenship in Graubünden, although the latter canton is but a few hours distant by rail from these two cities.

Strong, not to say exaggerated, love of locality has certain affinities with clannishness, and, as such incidents show, has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. In general, however, the Swiss of today prefer to dwell upon the brighter side of the situation. Thus Gottfried Keller, placing his words to be sure in the mouth of an enthusiastic orator at a shooting festival, sums up the matter in typical fashion as follows:

> Why, what a variety of people crowd our narrow space, manifold in their occupations, in customs and usages, in dress and dialect! . . . . How diverting it is that there is not a uniform type of Swiss, but that there are Zürcher and Bernese, Unterwaldner and Neuenburger, Graubündner and Basler, two kinds of Basler indeed; that there is an Appenzeller history and a Genevan history. This variety in unity, which may God preserve for us, is the true school of friendship; particularly in a case where political inter-

dependence grows into the personal friendship of a whole people it is a factor of the highest importance. For what civic spirit cannot achieve is made possible by the love of friends, and both grow into one and the same virtue.[5]

In the light of Swiss history prior to 1848, the view expressed by Keller must be pronounced decidely too roseate. Of course, all the earlier dissentions and civil wars which blot the annals of the country cannot be charged to local patriotism alone. Usually they proceeded from confessional, economic, and broader political divergences, but undoubtedly the resulting conflicts were intensified by cantonal spirit and cantonal organization. On one point, however, the great Swiss poet is thoroughly justified, namely, in his assumption that love of locality is based largely on local differences. Logically it could scarcely be otherwise: how may one expect any feeling of the sort to be cherished by residents in the innumerable precisely similar Gopher Prairies and Zenith Cities of our Middle West or by inhabitants of monotonous Russian and Siberian villages? In spite of its diminutive area, Switzerland, on the other hand, presents not only many localities, but localities which are strikingly individual and different one from another. Beside the wide range of historical backgrounds already noted, there are all the physical and climatic contrasts characteristic of a mountain country. There are the two religious confessions, each of which perpetuates ancient lines of demarcation. Fronting on Italy, France, Germany, and Austria there are differences of blood, language, and customs typified in Ticino, Geneva, Basel, and Graubünden, none of them a day's journey from the others but widely apart in atmosphere.

With such striking divergences of every sort persisting between cantons, and, for that matter, between the various valleys of the same canton, there is not the slightest danger that local peculiarities will be minimized or forgotten. On the contrary, the Swiss are wont to discuss them frankly and humorously at all times. The note of sarcasm is rarely struck; but the prosperous, solid superior burger of Basel is a familiar type, as is the hustling business man of Zürich proud of his connections with New York, the Calvinistically correct but internationally-minded resident of Geneva, the even more internationally-mannered, polyglot hotel-keeper of Luzern, the shy, solemn, somewhat stiff and mulish native of Graubünden, the Ticinese full of *gentilezza* and of sweet *parlando*, the citizen of St. Gallen noted for *Schwatz und Schweiss* ("babble and perspiration"), the Bernese, hard-boiled and stodgy but forceful, the Thurgauer with his more than Scottish thrift, the Appenzeller with his irrepressible sense of humor, and so on and so on through the entire range of the nineteen whole and six half-cantons. If there were the slightest danger of forgetting the foregoing differences, they would be brought to mind constantly by the innumerable *genre* sketches in which Swiss novelists so greatly excel.

---

[5] *Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten,* G.W. VI, 326.

The thorough teaching of both local history and local geography in the public schools, aided by a large number of excellent textbooks on the subject, transmits the knowledge of local peculiarities to the rising generation. Even strangers and tourists are not forgotten in this connection. In all cities, and often in towns of the second class, one finds bureaus of information which are unusually well equipped with local guide books, brief historical manuals, and the like, which are distributed gratis or sold at low prices. Old hotels and pensions which have survived through generations or centuries frequently present their guests with carefully written pamphlets recounting the part played by the establishment during its long career and listing the names of its more distinguished guests.[6] History lives vividly in the mind of a Swiss, particularly the history of his own town and canton.

Economic and political factors which have largely wiped out local peculiarities in the greater countries of Europe are so attenuated in Switzerland as to lose much of their effect. In Germany particularly, and to a less degree in France and Italy, large-scale production, advertising, and merchandising have brought about a degree of uniformity in living conditions, not so extreme, of course, as that prevailing in the United States but still widely different from the conditions characteristic of the countries named prior to the nineteenth century. In Switzerland, on the other hand, smaller units of production and distribution are made necessary by varying local standards, which as a result, continue to maintain themselves to a large degree. Of course, uniform currency, freedom of trade within the country, excellent postal, telegraph, telephone, and railroad services, the flood of tourist travel and the uniform civil code have not been without their effect. One notes, for example, the eager but somewhat artificial efforts of various societies to perpetuate local customs and costumes at least on festival occasions, and thus to make headway against the rising tide of uniformity.

---

[6] Thus a well-known hotel in Solothurn (13,065 inhabitants), which was the seat of residence of French ambassadors in Switzerland down to the end of the Old Régime, presents its guests with a forty-page pamphlet in English dealing with the history of the establishment and the town. A modest pension of Bern, now over a century old and which was managed by one family for over ninety years, has prepared, also in English, a brief account of its own history. Of course, these and other similar productions are written not without thought of profitable advertising. It is a very unobtrusive thought, however, and well-nigh buried in extremely interesting historical matter.

Similarly in the political field it may be said that Switzerland has worked out a careful system of checks and balances between centrifugal and centripetal forces, between the spirit of localism and the spirit of centralization. With the establishment of the constitution of 1848 the former lost their power to disturb the peace of the country seriously, as they had done so often before. Quite enough of the *Kantönligeist* has survived, however, to provoke acrid condemnation from time to time. On the other hand, the large scope allowed to cantonal and local self-government is entirely favorable to that "diversity in dress, in food, in the habits and usages of society," which, as Lord Bryce pointed out, "is . . . . obviously a thing to rejoice over, because it diminishes the terrible monotony of life."[7]

An unusually keen and sympathetic observer of the Swiss scene, Wilhelm Schäfer, has commented recently on the vivid individuality of the small Swiss town as contrasted with the dull uniformity of the small German town.[8] Following much the same method as Steffens in his "Tale of Two Cities," he takes Aarau (8,000 inhabitants) as an example of the former and Memmingen (12,000 inhabitants), in the Bavarian administrative district of Suabia, as an example of the latter, developing a series of contrasts which are wholly unfavorable to the German town. One cannot explain the present difference between the high civic vitality of Aarau as compared with Memmingen on the ground of race, for the blood of the inhabitants of the two places is much the same. Each had an equally glorious history prior to the nineteenth century. In the way of economic advantages there is little to choose between them; in population the German town is half as large again. The only explanation Schäfer can offer to account for the higher civic spirit of Aarau is the larger scope of local self-government permitted under the Swiss constitution. In Germany centralization under the empire and now under the republic have made smaller towns mere parts of the representative districts which elect members of the Reichstag. Local interest is greatly attenuated. The national constitution is a vast roof over the whole country, party platforms are addressed to millions of voters, but both are impersonal and universal; neither makes appeal to "a local habitation and a name." In Switzerland, on the other hand, interest in cantonal affairs often exceeds interest in national affairs. Landsgemeinden and town meetings bring together physically the entire electorates of cantons and communes, and the wide scope of local activities gives vital significance to such gatherings. Hence it is, concludes Schäfer in language closely resembling that of Gottfried Keller, that

---

[7] *The American Commonwealth,* I, 345.

[8] *Briefe aus der Schweiz und Erlebnis in Tirol* (Munich: Georg Müller, 1927), pp. 129 ff.

> the Swiss federal citizen is always in the first instance a Bernese, Basler, Zürcher, Glarner, or Appenzeller. In that which he names his liberty a bit of his native heath is inviolably preserved; whereas in that which the German subject had to achieve painfully through rebellion during the nineteenth century, there is nothing but the individual with his right to vote.

If this conclusion holds good, as undoubtedly it does in broad outline, for Germany, which still retains a federal form of government, how much more true it must be for centralized France and Fascist Italy.

While in general the devotion of the Swiss to what he calls "the narrower homeland" goes out to his own canton, valley, or commune, there is one spot of sacred soil cherished in common by all the citizens of the republic. This is the Rütli (literally, "clearing in the forest") across from Brunnen on the western shore of Lake Luzern, where, according to legend on November 7, 1307, the representatives of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden entered into a league in the name of their cantons against the tyrannous overlordship of Austria. Twenty-five years ago this national shrine was threatened with purchase and "improvement" for hotel purposes. However, the school children of Switzerland contributed in pennies a sum sufficient to buy the "sacred meadow" and presented it to the federal government. The latter, fortunately, has had the rare good sense to leave the Rütli in its natural state. There is one unobtrusive little monument erected in 1821 to "the singers of the Rütli song," and a picturesque old châlet at the extreme edge of the clearing is utilized as a restaurant and rest house. Otherwise, the meadow remains as it must have been more than six hundred years ago, a charming fairy ring of deepest green, fringed about by dense forest growth, looking down upon the turquoise waters of the lake some hundreds of feet below and across to the twin heights of the Mythen. The Rütli is a favorite place of pilgrimage, thousands of Swiss visiting it every year, among them many groups of children out on school hikes, who listen, with something of a pardonable air of proprietorship, to the old caretaker's recital of mingled legend and history.

CHAPTER XVI

FOREIGNERS AND FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN SWITZERLAND

Earlier writers on Switzerland were accustomed to explain the success of its democratic institutions as due in considerable degree to the absence of any large foreign element in the population. One may doubt whether this explanation deserved the attention formerly given it; in any event, it no longer applies. In 1850, to be sure, aliens constituted so small a proportion of the population (3 per cent), that they exercised no perceptible influence, being "drowned" in the midst of the native element, as the saying of the time had it. A generation later the census of 1888 showed them to make up slightly more than 8 per cent of the total. Following that year, however, a rapid influx of aliens took place, so that by 1900 the percentage of foreign born had reached 11.6. A decade later it was 14.7—exactly equal to the corresponding figure for the United States at the same time. In certain border cantons where, of course, the proportion of foreign-born was much larger than for the country as a whole, somewhat startling percentages were recorded for 1910: e.g., Geneva, 40.4; Basel-Stadt, 37.6; Ticino, 28.2. The influx of aliens continued unabated until 1914. According to the closest possible estimates, the percentage of foreigners for that year was as high as 17 per cent; but owing to the outbreak of the World War and the consequent calling of many nationals of the belligerent countries to the colors, it fell to 10.4 per cent in 1920. Subsequently, however, a new wave of immigration has set in, and it is expected that the census to be taken in the course of the current year (1930) will show a percentage approximating the high figure of twenty years ago.

Compared with other continental European countries, the percentage of foreigners in Switzerland is excessively large. Belgium, which came next in this respect, had only 3.43 per cent in 1910; France, only 2.86 per cent according to the census of 1911. In the latter country agitation for restriction began as soon as the foreign-born exceeded 1 per cent of the total. Considering the much larger figures early registered by Switzerland, it is not to be wondered at that discussion of the question has attracted a constantly increasing share of public attention during recent decades. What is truly remarkable in the attitude of the Swiss is the extreme calmness with which they have regarded the situation and the deliberateness with which they have set about the enactment of legislative remedies. Confronted as they have been during recent decades by a wave of immigrants even greater in proportion than that pouring into the United States, there has been no development of heated antiforeign feeling, no passionate outbursts resembling those fostered by our Know-Nothing, A.P.A., and Ku Klux Klan movements.

Of course, while the relative volume of the foreign element in the two countries has been much the same, other features of the problem differ widely. For one thing, the Swiss have not had to cope with race feeling engendered by the presence of the negro in the United States, nor with the immigration of Asiatics and of low-grade East European stocks. Almost exclusively their foreign population has been derived from neighboring nations with high cultural standards—Germany, France, Italy, and Austria. To a large extent also, the citizens of each of these countries settled in portions of Switzerland where their own language is indigenous, or at least, as in the case of the Germans, where closely related dialects are spoken. Hence the absence of any marked tendency to regard them as "Dutchmen" or "Wops." In this connection it is a significant fact that the Swiss apparently never employ our oft-repeated analogy of the "melting-pot." Moreover, they are well aware of the advantage accruing to their own industry and commerce from the residence abroad of large numbers of Swiss citizens, and for that reason are inclined to follow a policy of reciprocity in dealing with immigrants. And, of course, the country is too small and too closely in contact with its great neighbors to assume a challenging attitude in the matter, even assuming that it wished to do so, which, as recent referendum votes have shown, is not the case.

On the other hand, the fact that nearly all immigrants into Switzerland come from immediately neighboring territories which are overwhelmingly Roman Catholic adds a religious complication to the problem which is not without significance.[1] With characteristic economy also Swiss communes are strongly disinclined to assume burdens of poor relief likely to be imposed by masses of indigent foreigners. The "right of asylum" for political offenders has been one of the ancient and honorable traditions of the country, subject, of course, to the condition that those who avail themselves of it refrain from propaganda, plots, and overt action against the country from which they have fled or other friendly foreign powers. In point of fact, it is not a legal right at all but rather an act of grace, the exercise of which by cantonal authorities has been under some sort of supervision since 1889 by a special officer known as the "federal attorney." Despite the caution of the Swiss in according asylum to political refugees, the federal government has often been embarrassed by their actions while on its soil, such cases furnishing additional arguments to those opposed to immigration. For example, the collection in 1924 of some 30,000 francs mostly from German firms and from Germans resident in Switzerland, for the benefit of Hitler's *Putsch* to restore the Hohenzollerns, led to an interpellation in the National Council. Although a member of the Federal Council responded with a sweeping denial, the facts as stated above were fully proved from German sources four years later, much to the indignation of the Swiss people.[2]

---

[1] On this point, cf. chap. viii above.

In general, however, the Swiss seem to be less afraid of foreigners in their midst than of foreign influence over their affairs. They look with a suspicious eye upon the investment of money by capitalists of neighboring nations in their domestic, commercial, and industrial undertakings. They criticize sharply the appointment of foreign teachers in their universities and middle schools. They are gravely disturbed by the large circulation of foreign newspapers and to a less degree by the sale of foreign pamphlets and books within the country. Any Swiss newspaper which is suspected of being owned even in part by foreign capitalists is certain to lose severely in influence. Between 1914 and 1918 Switzerland was inundated with war propaganda prepared by the official press agencies of certain belligerent states, which jeopardized the time-honored policy of neutrality, threatening the peace and the very existence of the country.[3] After the lapse of fifteen years the memory of these efforts to control national policies from the outside still rankles.

"Over-foreignization" *(Überfremdung)*, therefore, is considered the great enemy. It includes not only the regulation of immigration and naturalization—these, indeed, being regarded as minor elements in the general situation—but also the combating of outside intellectual forces, resistance to the political pull exercised by neighboring great states, and the prevention, so far as possible, of economic penetration by foreign capital. All together, these constitute a formidable galaxy of threats to national integrity, particularly as seen from within by a small population, occupying a restricted territory in the very heart of

---

[2] Cf. article in the *Gazette de Lausanne,* January 12, 1928.

[3] For an effective, albeit somewhat acrid, presentation of the foregoing counts in the Swiss indictment of foreign influence, cf. C. A. Loosli, *Ausländische Einflüsse in der Schweiz* (Zürich: Füssli, 1917). A very valuable brief account of war propaganda, including our own, may be found in J. Ruchti, *Geschichte der Schweiz während des Weltkrieges, 1914–1919* (Bern: Haupt, 1928), pp. 129 ff.

Western Europe. Against external intellectual influences, the schools form the first line of defense, aided by literature, tradition, and symbolism. Against the political pull of neighboring great powers, reliance is placed on the maintenance of peace and friendship with all, extreme circumspection of foreign policy, strict neutrality, the League of Nations, the submission of treaties to referendum vote, and—if the worst comes to the worst—upon the army, reinforced perhaps by troops supplied by allied powers. The question of foreign orders and decorations, now before the electorate, furnishes a capital illustration, on a small scale, of how the Swiss react against one influence of this character; accordingly it will be discussed in some detail later.

Economic penetration is a threat of more recent origin than the foregoing: operating through channels largely concealed from public view, it may prove to be far more dangerous in the long run. Against this menace the obvious defense is the development of domestic capital in sufficient volume to take care of the business needs of the country, the careful husbanding of all resources, maintenance of friendly relations between employers and employees, and the promotion of domestic industry and prosperity. In this connection it is worth recalling that one of the strongest motives leading to the nationalization of the railroads of Switzerland was to set them free from control by foreign stockholders.

Returning to the simpler aspects of the problem, i.e., those relating to foreigners coming into, or resident within, the country, of course Switzerland is in no position to challenge its great neighbors by the arbitrary restriction of immigration or by the establishment of a quota system fixing the number to be admitted annually. What is desired is some sort of balance of trade, so to speak, as the conditions of the labor market at home and abroad may make it desirable, between the export of its own highly trained technicians, engineers, business men, hotel employees, and "quality" workers generally, and the import of the kind of laborers in greatest local demand, viz., workers in the building trades—masons, stone-cutters, plasterers and stucco-workers, painters, glaziers, woodworkers; of farm laborers and road builders; of butchers and cobblers; of workers in the clothing trades and in laundries; of printers and bookbinders. Obviously, a fairly simple problem, so far as mere formulation is concerned, but in practice beset with difficulties of an economic nature and subject to sudden irritations due to cantankerous nationalistic sentiment. Negotiations based on mutual understanding and good will may accomplish much in this field not only for Switzerland but for the world as a whole, especially if aided by the League of Nations and the International Labor Office.

So far as naturalization is concerned, the Swiss have, of course, much greater leeway for individual action; nevertheless, until recently they allowed matters to drift. It is difficult to conceive anything more directly related to the interests of the country as a whole than the admission of foreigners to citizenship. Nevertheless, in Switzerland extreme states' rights views long prevailed regarding naturalization. The federal constitution provides that "every citizen of a canton is a Swiss citizen" (Art. 43); and in their turn the cantons passed the buck by accepting as citizens any foreigner naturalized by one of their communes. National interest in the premises was safeguarded to some extent, it is true, by a law which required approval by the Federal Council, given upon the advice of its Political Department, before communal and cantonal citizenship could be conferred.

Upon the more than 3,000 communes of the country, therefore, devolved in the last analysis the work of accepting or rejecting candidates for Swiss citizenship. It cannot be said that they followed any uniform practice in the matter. Political communes were fairly easy-going, but the older citizen communes which owned valuable common pasture and forest lands often charged a stiff fee for naturalization. When the rush of foreign-born to acquire citizenship began in 1915, one little Bernese town admitted 263 applicants at 300 francs each, while during the same period the capital city of the canton admitted 15 only. Prior to the outbreak of the World War, indeed, foreigners felt but slight inclination to take out naturalization papers, since under treaty provisions they enjoyed as residents almost the same economic and social rights as Swiss citizens. Thus between 1901 and 1913 the number of foreigners in the country increased by birth and immigration, on the average, 17,000 annually, whereas the number who were naturalized each year was only 4,000.

As a result of the outbreak of the World War Switzerland was flooded not only with propaganda but also with a motley array of aliens—secret agents, spies, deserters, revolutionists, and profiteers.[4] In spite of rather extreme provocation on the part of these gentry, the Federal Council played a waiting game until November 21, 1917, when by virtue of its plenipotentiary powers it issued a general decree regulating the frontier police and providing certain measures of control for aliens living within the country. After the conclusion of hostilities, however, there was the inevitable return to "normalcy"; most of the federal regulations regarding aliens were rescinded, and the system of cantonal control, loose and unco-ordinated, resumed sway. Nevertheless, a considerable measure of popular ill-feeling against foreigners persisted, heightened by the war-time machinations of which some of them had been guilty.

---

[4] For a vivid picture of their activities, cf. chaps. xi–xiv, inclusive, of Will Irwin's *A Reporter at Armageddon* (1918).

Another factor which contributed to the antagonism directed against resident aliens was the rush for naturalization which took place between 1914 and 1918. Obviously, not all of those who participated in it were inspired by pure devotion to Swiss institutions and ideals. During the four years preceding the World War less than 20,000 persons had been naturalized, whereas the number increased to more than 37,000 for the period from 1914 to 1918. As a result, demands were made on every hand that the period of residence required, which had been fixed by federal law in 1903 at three years, should be lengthened materially. In compliance with popular clamor the chambers passed a law, June 26, 1920, which increased the term to six years. Meanwhile, however, petitions had been circulated for an initiative amendment to the constitution which fixed the required period at fifteen years, of which at least twelve, including the two years immediately prior to application, must have been spent actually in residence. Further, it provided that naturalized citizens who had not spent the greater part of their childhood in Switzerland could vote but could not be elected to political office under the federation, the canton, or the commune. At the same time a second initiative was brought forward conferring upon the federation the right and the duty to expel from Switzerland foreigners guilty of acts endangering the internal or external security of the country, specifically citing among such acts "participation in intrigues against the constitution or in political undertakings likely to disturb good relations between Switzerland and foreign states, also economic activities contrary to good faith and credit and injurious to the general interests of Swiss business."

Although the Swiss had cherished anything but good will toward the aliens in their midst during the war and the first few years thereafter, feeling on the subject had begun to subside by 1922. Unquestionably also, the above mentioned initiatives were considered too drastic in their provision as to term of residence and in refusing the right of passive suffrage to naturalized citizens who had not grown up in Switzerland. Moreover, there was felt to be more centralization of power than was desirable in the provisions regarding expulsion. Accordingly, after a campaign which proved much less bitter than had been anticipated, the two initiatives were overwhelmingly voted down, June 11, 1922, not a single canton being carried in favor of either.[5] It was, indeed, a case of "*Allzu straff gespannt, zerspringt der Bogen.*"

On September 24 of the same year further evidence of the dwindling away of the war psychosis was afforded by the defeat of the so-called *Lex Haeberlin,* the popular vote being 376,832 against to 303,794 in its favor. In the form of an amendment to the criminal law this proposal provided heavy penalties for various forms of agitation deemed threatening to constitutional order. Virtually the entire conservative press and leadership of the country favored its adoption, but obviously the Swiss people were much less alarmed about the safety of the state than were their political mentors. It was these two expressions of the democratic sovereign, both showing a certain consideration for radical agitators, foreign and domestic, which so alarmed well-to-do Swiss citizens when the capital tax levy was thrust upon them toward the end of the same year. Nevertheless, as we have already had occasion to note, that socialistic proposal was defeated, December 3, 1922, more decisively than any initiative ever submitted to the Swiss people.[6] Taken all together, therefore, the various expressions of Swiss popular will during that memorable year show it to be both flexible and essentially sound of judgment, capable, on the one hand, of tolerance toward radicalism, and, on the other hand, ready with decisive conservative action when the fundamental rights of private property were deemed to be threatened.

Subsequent constitutional legislation has achieved certain minor, yet not inconsiderable, victories in this field with a minimum of popular opposition. On October 25, 1925, an amendment (69*ter*) was adopted by a popular vote of 382,381 to 232,272 and a cantonal vote of 18½ to 3½, which illustrates rather curiously the tendency to conciliate states' rights sentiment as far as possible. Clause 1 of the proposal provides: "Legislation regarding entry and departure, sojourn, and settlement of foreigners belongs to the federation." Clause 2 throws a sop to the home-rule element, as follows: "Decisions regarding matters of sojourn and settlement are to be made by the cantons in accordance with standards prescribed by federal law." And Clause 3 ties a large string to this concession, specifically reserving for final decision by the federation all important cases likely to come up under the amendment.

---

[5] On the first initiative, dealing with naturalization, the popular vote was 65,828 for to 347,988 against; on the second, dealing with expulsion, 159,200 for to 258,881 against. The percentage of participation on the initiative regarding naturalization, 42.4, was the lowest ever recorded on a federal initiative proposal.

[6] The popular vote was 736,952 against to 109,702 for, not a single canton being carried by the proponents. Participation on this occasion reached the unprecedented figure of 85.3 per cent.

A second amendment (Art. 44), adopted May 20, 1928, by a popular vote of 316,250 to 131,250 and a cantonal vote of 19½ to 2½, attracted considerable attention because it involved the principle of compulsory naturalization under certain circumstances.[7] Reaffirming the older provisions of the constitution on the subject of naturalization in general, it added the following clause: "Federal legislation may prescribe that the child of foreign parents is by birth a Swiss citizen if its mother was by descent a Swiss citizen and if at the time of the child's birth the parents are residents of Switzerland." A child possessing the foregoing qualifications is to be naturalized in the commune to which its mother had earlier belonged, but it does not acquire right to share in the property owned by the commune unless cantonal legislation so provides. Later clauses of the amendment, obviously designed to soothe states' rights sentiment, provide that the federation shall pay one-half the cost of local poor relief up to the eighteenth year of age in the cases of persons who have been compulsorily naturalized.

Thanks to the partial application of the principle of *jus soli* by the amendment of 1928, it is estimated that as soon as the necessary legislation to complete it has been enacted, some 1,800 to 2,000 children born each year will automatically be made Swiss citizens. Considering that the mothers of these children were citizens prior to marriage, that the children themselves are born on Swiss soil and presumably are to be educated in Swiss schools, there is nothing particularly daring in the experiment. As a matter of fact, the amendment was drawn with the greatest caution, more as a trial balloon to see how the winds of public opinion were blowing than with any great confidence of success. Now that the Swiss electorate has shown itself progressively inclined in the matter, further proposals will be presented to it until, always cautiously and step by step, a more uniform and logical system regulating naturalization, sojourn, settlement, and the like has been established.

THE QUESTION OF FOREIGN ORDERS

It is safe to say that few clauses of the constitution of the United States are more neglected by commentators than the one providing that "no person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign state."[8] Switzerland, on the other hand, has scarcely known a moment of history free from outside influence of kings, princes, and foreign states, nor has it yet found a completely satisfactory solution of the problem thus presented. As a little republican oasis in the heart of a monarchical continent, it was, of course, much more strongly exposed to the lure of titles than were the United States, even at the beginning of their history. Propinquity goes far to explain the greater difficulties encountered by Switzerland in this connection; nevertheless, it must be said that certain classes of its citizens, small, no doubt, but influential to a much larger degree than their number would indicate, have always fallen short of the sternest democratic virtue when tempted by princely ribbons and titles. Not that any "holier than thou" attitude need be taken by Americans, for we have our own sufficient quota of decoration-hunters. Their influence in public affairs is so microscopic, however, that no one seems ever to worry about it. At least it may be said for the Swiss that, confronted by greater perturbation due to the influence of foreign decorations, they have vigorously set about seeking a remedy.

---

[7] On this amendment and the conditions leading up to it, cf. the scholarly study by E. Delaquis, *Erstrebtes und Erreichtes zur Lösung unserer Fremdenfrage* (Zürich: Füssli, 1924); also article by the same author in the *Bulletin, Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft,* 14. Jhrg., Heft 2 (March–April, 1928), S. 72.

Switzerland recently celebrated the four hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the victory at Morat (1476). It might have taken advantage of the occasion also to recall the tactics of the crafty Louis XI, who, by pensions and rich presents distributed in influential quarters, managed to gain Swiss supporters willing to send their countrymen to fight in a war which resulted largely to the benefit of the French crown. During the whole period of brilliant Swiss military success from Morat to Marignano (1476–1515), the emperor, the pope, and neighboring princes of every degree poured gold into the country to buy troops, alliances, expeditions against their enemies, or peace for themselves. In 1503 the Diet of the Confederation issued its famous *Pensionenbrief*, forbidding the receipt of pensions and presents from foreign princes. Zwingli thundered against the evil in countless sermons until his untimely death at Kappel in 1531. It was a period of general violence and unsettlement, embittered by confessional hatreds; and foreign influence contributed materially to the deep demoralization and disorganization of domestic affairs. While the receipt of pensions was

---

[8] Art. I, sec. 9, clause 8. Bryce does not mention this clause in the *American Commonwealth,* and most American textbook-writers ignore it. Herbert W. Horwill, in his recent book on *The Usages of the American Constitution,* p. 190, does discuss with considerable force and humor the preceding and following clauses which provide that "no title of nobility shall be granted by the United States" and that "no state shall grant any title of nobility."

> not considered by contemporaries to be equivalent to corruption or treason, nevertheless as a result differences of opinion which otherwise could have been settled by quiet deliberation developed into conflicts of interest, and over issues that at bottom affected Switzerland only in a secondary degree, parties were formed which fought each other with every means of intrigue, bribery, fraud and violence.[9]

With the decline of Swiss military power the pension evil became somewhat less virulent. Nevertheless, it formed the background of the sale of mercenary soldiers which went on for three centuries. Recognizing, as one must, the economic necessity of this form of emigration as the only possible outlet at the time for superfluous population, still it is hard to restrain a feeling of horror at the coldly calculating traffic of rich patricians in the flesh and blood of their poorer countrymen. The receipt of pensions and gifts from foreign princes continued to the fall of the Old Confederation (1798), toward which crushing disaster it contributed not a little. Quite obviously a loose league of self-centered cantons is in no position to protect itself against the influence either of money or of titles distributed by powerful neighbors among its citizens.

Following the French occupation (1798–1815), a new sense of national dignity made its appearance. A number of cantons adopted constitutional provisions prohibiting the acceptance of pensions or titles from foreign governments, and the following article (12) was inserted in the federal constitution of 1848:

> Members of the departments of the federal government, federal civil and military officials, and federal representatives or commissioners, are forbidden to accept from foreign governments any pensions or salaries, or any titles, gifts or decorations.
>
> Persons of the foregoing classes who are already in possession of pensions, titles, or decorations, must renounce the enjoyment of pensions and the bearing of titles and decorations during their term of office.
>
> Nevertheless, inferior officials may be authorized by the Federal Council to continue in the receipt of pensions.

At the general revision of the federal constitution in 1874, the preceding article was continued with the addition of clauses providing that "no decoration shall be worn in the Swiss army, nor may any title conferred by a foreign government be borne"; and further, that "no officer, non-commissioned officer or soldier shall accept such distinctions." It will be observed that, like the corresponding provisions of our own constitution, the foregoing clauses apply only to federal officials, leaving private citizens free to accept decorations, orders, or pensions from foreign governments, subject only to the inconvenience or loss of laying them aside temporarily in case they take office.[10] As a matter of fact, instances of the latter sort have been relatively infrequent.[11] On the other hand, the receipt by private citizens of decorations conferred by foreign governments has been the subject of much acrimonious comment from 1848 to the present time.

---

[9] Ernst Gagliardi, *Geschichte der Schweiz* (Zürich: Rascher, 1920), I, 213.

Prior to the World War it was the neighboring monarchies, particularly Germany, which were most prodigal in distributing such favors. In 1918 Germany and Austria became republics and abolished decorations, and since the war Italy also has been much less inclined to confer distinctions upon Swiss citizens. France, on the other hand, has developed an unparalleled generosity since 1918. According to recent estimates, some five hundred Swiss citizens are entitled to wear orders conferred by that government, and their number is increased by thirty or forty each year.[12]

For the most part this "rain of decorations" has fallen in Western Switzerland. The citizens chiefly favored—editors, politicians, cantonal officials, university professors, lawyers, doctors, bankers—belong to professions which are in a position to influence public opinion effectively. It is this feature of the situation which has aroused sentiment most strongly against the acceptance of foreign decorations. Public opinion in Switzerland has also been dissatisfied for some time with the attitude taken by the French government in negotiations over the zone and tariff questions, and there is a marked tendency in some quarters to believe that the lavish distribution by the latter of orders is intended to gain support for its interests among influential citizens of the western cantons. Criticisms along this line have generally been disregarded by responsible officials; nevertheless, Federal President Motta made a statement in the Council of States during the session of 1927 to the effect that the Federal Council had recently sent confidential representations to a neighboring government informing it that the conferring of numerous decorations was undesirable from the Swiss point of view. In reply the government referred to had sought to justify its policy by calling attention to the fact that it granted large numbers of orders in other countries, also that it was constantly being solicited urgently by many Swiss citizens who wished to be decorated.

---

[10] Cantonal officials are also left free by the federal constitution to accept decorations. However, some of the cantonal constitutions have provisions against their acceptance by their own officials.

[11] In 1860, a successful candidate for the National Council declared himself to be in receipt of a pension from the Dutch government which he was unwilling to give up, and was accordingly excluded from a seat in the chamber. Among persons entitled to wear decorations who have been elected to high federal offices and permitted to take them upon condition that the decorations be laid aside during incumbency have been National Councilor Favarger and Federal President Gustav Ador.

[12] See article on "Das Ordensunwesen und seine Bekämpfung" in *Der Staatsbürger,* 12. Jhrg., Nr. 7 (April 1, 1928), S. 50. According to a valuable article quoting figures in some detail which was contributed by its Paris correspondent to the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of April 25, 1928, the number of holders of decorations conferred by the French Legion of Honor in various countries was as follows: Great Britain, 800 officers of high rank and 1,600 chevaliers; Italy, 16 groups *(casiers)* of 200 each; Belgium, 10 groups; United States, 10 groups; Spain, 8 groups; Greece, 4 groups; Switzerland, 2 groups. According to the same authority, of the 300 Swiss citizens receiving decorations of the Legion of Honor since 1880, many were engineers, business men, physicians, and social workers living abroad. Among the Swiss residents thus distinguished, all professions were represented—ecclesiastics, doctors, bankers, railroad directors, and officials of the Red Cross.

Convinced that nothing more would or could be done by the government in question toward the abatement of the evil, opponents of foreign decorations decided to appeal to the initiative. Accordingly a constitutional amendment revising Article 12 was drawn up providing that

> all Swiss citizens are forbidden to accept pensions or salaries, titles, presents, or orders and decorations, from the governments of foreign states. The violation of this prohibition carries with it the loss of political rights.

To avoid undue hardship, a further clause of the revised article provides that citizens permanently residing abroad may, upon application to the Federal Council, be exempted from the foregoing prohibition. The motive for this exception was the conviction that titles and decorations were helpful to Swiss in foreign countries not only socially but also in business relations to the advantage of export trade—an argument which, by the way, is used frequently, although not always convincingly, in favor of the acceptance of orders by business men residing at home. Further, according to the initiative, payments for services rendered under contract to foreign states are declared not to fall under the prohibition of pensions and salaries. Finally, the new provisions are made non-retroactive, which means that persons who have received decorations prior to the adoption of the amendment may retain them upon condition, of course, that if elected to federal office they must be laid aside.

Early in 1928, a "Federal Actions Committee in Favor of the Initiative Prohibiting Decorations" was formed by members of various political parties. The signers of its "Call to the Swiss People" included leaders of prominence in twenty cantons, among them 45 members of the National Council, nearly a quarter of the membership of that body, of whom 17 were Radical Democrats, 16 representatives of the Peasants' Party (more than half of its group), 10 Catholic Conservatives, and 2 members of the Social-Political fraction. By April 1 and before its efforts had been extended to all sections of the country, the Committee reported that it had secured the 50,000 signatures necessary to launch the initiative. Subsequently 25,000 additional signatures were secured almost without organized effort, the whole campaign costing less than 6,000 francs. In some places the petitions were signed by nearly all the qualified voters.

Meanwhile the press has kept up a lively discussion of the issue, for the most part rather critical, especially so in the case of clerical and socialistic papers. The former have raised the question of certain papal orders, and are not entirely satisfied with the official assurance of the Actions Committee that, since the Holy See is not a foreign government, such orders are not prohibited. Or if they are satisfied that the answer is correct, they are not pleased by its implications regarding the temporal power of the papacy. Both parties to the controversy have been considerably embarrassed by the establishment early in 1929 of the new "Vatican state." In general the attitude of the Socialist press is unfavorable to the initiative, partly because the backers of the latter are alleged to be hostile to labor, partly on the ground that the influence of foreign titles is of very little consequence as compared with that of foreign capitalistic enterprises operating in the country.

Among organizations interested in public questions the People's League for the Independence of Switzerland, which, according to its opponents, is somewhat Germanophile in sentiment, has taken a strong position in favor of the amendment. The New Helvetic Society devoted much attention to the initiative proposal, threshing it out at length at a general assembly held in Bern, November 19, 1927. Opinions were widely divided at this meeting, most of the speakers being anxious to avoid action which might estrange delegates from the Romance cantons, which, of course, feel themselves under fire to some extent in the matter. In the end the New Helvetic Society adopted resolutions condemning the acceptance or wearing of foreign decorations by Swiss citizens resident in the country, and calling upon the federal legislature to fix penalties in such cases. It was decided further that so long as the present constitutional provision remains unchanged the Federal Council should request foreign governments to secure its consent before conferring orders upon Swiss citizens residing at home.[13]

[13] *Bulletin, Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft,* XIII, Jhrg., Nr. 11–12 (November–December, 1927), S. 259.

With the exception of certain extremists and others who would like to make political capital against France, there is general agreement that the evil of decorations is not great enough to justify risking a reopening of the breach between Welsch and Deutsch. The latter contingency seems unlikely to occur, however, as many strong supporters of the initiative reside in the western cantons. Opponents of foreign orders make the point that while, for the present, Germany is not a competitor in that field, it may amend its constitution and become so in the future. If Switzerland does not provide protection for itself in the meantime, the whole country, east as well as west, may be deluged under decorations, with a consequent great increase of the evil of foreign influence.

In a call appealing to the people of Bern to support the initiative the following three main points were made:

1. The system of orders is un-Swiss. Whoever accepts an order becomes obligated to the foreign government conferring it upon him, and surrenders his independence with reference to it in part at least.
2. The system of orders is undemocratic. It promotes the artificial formation of castes and privileged classes.
3. The system of orders is also to be condemned from a human standpoint. It is built upon vanity, servility, and pretence.

In addition to arguments of the foregoing character, friends of the initiative make the most of the historic evils of pensions and decorations in Switzerland. They admit that the latter are not such direct agents of corruption as the former, but are fond of quoting a remark made in 1817 by Talleyrand, the French minister, in Bern, to his government, as follows: "Once we won support in Switzerland by money; not having any of it now, we must win support by conferring orders and the like."

Arguments against the initiative most commonly take the form of denying the importance attached to orders and decorations as means of winning foreign influence. Granting that the recipients are men of high standing, it is pointed out that their number is relatively very small; moreover, the fact that they have accepted such favors is suspected if not absolutely known, and, among a population so democratic and so hostile to foreign enticements as the Swiss, the net result may be a loss of influence. Cases are on record where men of prominence have been criticized savagely by their compatriots on this ground.[14] Since the evil of foreign orders is grossly exaggerated, the advocates of the constitutional amendment lay themselves open to the charge of demagogy as well as to that of sectionalism or of Francophobia. Opponents of the initiative criticize particularly its penal clause, holding that the mere loss of the right to vote would deter few private citizens from acceptance. Some of them propose instead a fine, which, however, would have to be large to be effective; while still others would be content with a *lex imperfecta* in the form of a mere constitutional prohibition, holding that, were such an amendment adopted, public opinion would develop into an effective sanction. In general, the arguments of those opposed to the initiative suffer because they must concede, perforce, the likelihood that foreign influence is enhanced by the receipt of orders and decorations. While they had a much better press at the beginning of the controversy, the opinion of the "sovereign," i.e., of the masses of Swiss voters, seemed to be swinging against them. Meanwhile, however, no date was set for voting on the initiative, and public interest in the matter has cooled down markedly. From some points of view a mere tempest in a teapot, the incident nevertheless reveals Swiss touchiness on the subject of "over-foreignization."

---

[14] Particularly that of Alfred Escher, the great railroad builder and banker of Zürich. Gottfried Keller, the poet, accepted a Bavarian decoration after protesting the impropriety of doing so, but was careful never to wear it. Cf. H. M. Kriesi, *Gottfried Keller als Politiker* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1918), p. 109.

SUMMARY AND ESTIMATES

How important is the rôle played by each of the various mechanisms of civic training which are employed in Switzerland? To be specific, how much of a contribution is made to the development of the good Swiss citizen by:

I. Political parties?
II. Government service, civil and military?
III. Schools?
IV. Churches?
V. The family?
VI. Special patriotic and other societies?
VII. Language, literature, and the press?
VIII. Symbolism; cults; art, music, drama?
IX. Tradition and devotion to locality?

To venture definite answers to queries so broad as the foregoing requires a certain temerity. There is danger not only from personal prejudice, confessed already in the Preface; there is danger also from national prepossessions. It seems impossible to escape the latter; for example, a citizen of the United States who attempts to evaluate Swiss political parties must admit that the back of his mind is occupied pretty fully by what he knows of American parties. So far as possible, the author has attempted to reduce this factor of error by bringing to bear somewhat rigorously all the information he happens to possess about other countries than the United States and Switzerland in making his estimates of various mechanisms of civic training in the latter.

Perhaps the best method of avoiding the difficulties noted above is the pedagogical device of grades. Every experienced teacher is aware of the element of arbitrariness involved in them; nevertheless, they do supply categories of merit or effectiveness sufficiently broad both to mark off distinctions and to avoid gross unfairness. Using "first" as synonymous with high excellence, "second" as implying good, and "third" as fair, one is able to rate each of the mechanisms under consideration with a considerable degree of confidence.

But, the reader may inquire, what of a fourth or fifth—possibly even a lower category, corresponding to the "poor," the "conditioned," the "flunks" of the academic world? Frankly, they would have no application to the affairs of Switzerland. The greatest single demerit to be recorded against that country, alcoholism, is not one of the mechanisms listed above, although one may criticize the church, the family, reform associations, and political parties for failure hitherto to meet the evil adequately. Neither is the refusal to grant woman suffrage included; although, if one is so inclined, the same institutions may be blamed for lukewarmness regarding it. As for political corruption—that besetting sin of modern democracies—Switzerland is in a class by itself. Bryce narrates how, having inquired of a well-informed and judicious Swiss friend as to the principal faults of the government at Bern, he was told that occasionally parliamentary commissions chose to conduct their investigations at some agreeable mountain hotel during the summer season, living there at public expense. Whereupon, with unwonted humor, the venerable author of *Modern Democracies* replied: "If you are not jesting, and this is the blackest sin you can confess, then think of Paris and Montreal, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati, and in the words of our children's hymn, bless the goodness and the grace that have made you a happy Swiss boy."[1]

It is noteworthy also that in his final comparison of the six governments examined in *Modern Democracies*—the United States, France, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Switzerland—Bryce gives virtually the highest rating to the last-named in all good qualities, viz., the intelligence of the average man, the extent to which the best-educated class exert themselves in public affairs, and the existence of a sentiment of national unity and of an intelligently active public opinion. Similarly, he assigns the smallest number of demerits to the Swiss in reviewing various defects observable in the six governments, viz., failure of the executive to maintain law and order; administrative extravagance; want of honesty in administrators, legislators, and voters; faulty administration of justice; the spirit and power of party; professionalism in politics; and the power of wealth.[2]

Mindful of the difficulties above mentioned and with all due deference, the author nevertheless ventures to grade two mechanisms of Swiss civic training as "thirds"—the church, and the family; three as "seconds,"—government service, special patriotic and other societies, and language, literature, and the press; and four as "firsts"—political parties, schools, symbolism, tradition and devotion to locality.

Taking up each of these briefly, it is obvious that in rating the church as making a fair contribution only to civic training a sharp distinction must be drawn at once between Protestants and Catholics. The latter, with their innumerable social organizations of every sort, supply substance and purpose to one of the four principal political parties. Nevertheless, both confessions have cooled down markedly since the fighting forties of the last century, the Protestants, to be sure, considerably more than the Catholics. In an age of increasing materialism, which has affected Switzerland nearly as much as the rest of the Western World, economic preoccupations have thrust theological interests to one side. It is inconceivable that leaders of the religious denominations of that country could play the part taken by certain representatives of Protestant denominations in the United States during the presidential campaign of 1928, or earlier in the Ku Klux Klan movement, or in the fight for prohibition. One might add, quite devoutly, "Thank God for that"; also for the further fact that religious feeling is a much less disturbing factor in the politics of Switzerland today than in the politics of France, England, Italy, or of our own country. While therefore a "third" only as a mechanism of civic training, it is possible that within the proper sphere of their activities Swiss churches deserve a higher rating not only as pointing the way to heaven but also as heralding "on earth peace, good will among men."

---

[1] I, 446.

[2] *Op. cit.*, II, 446 ff.

As compared with other Western European countries, the family in Switzerland presents no peculiarities and develops no marked efficiency as a mechanism of civic training; hence the "third" assigned it in that connection. In their divorce-rate the Swiss come nearest to the world's highest record for Christian nations, held by the United States —whether or not that be considered a wholly bad symptom. Moreover, so long as Swiss women are excluded from suffrage, the more important partner in each family union is compelled in her dealings with the state to resort to that venerable flimflam known as "vicarious representation." On the other side of the ledger, one can set down the economic and social equality enjoyed by women, the numerous and influential organizations they have formed, the cult of ancestry among old burgher and peasant stocks, the really fine, simple, economical family life prevailing among the best of all classes of the population, and, finally, the unusually strong devotion to and interest in children. While Swiss women are far from being so "emancipated" as are women in the United States, none the less they may well be envied by their sisters in other European countries. Beyond the favoring factors noted above, which, however, are fairly common elsewhere, there is nothing in Swiss family life which could be recommended to other countries as likely to improve their methods of training for citizenship.

Turning now to the mechanisms regarded as deserving a "second" or good grade, it must be confessed that the greatest difficulty was experienced in so marking language, literature, and the press. Possibly these should have been divided for separate consideration and rating. Language, indeed, is scarcely a mechanism in the same sense as are literature and the press, the latter, of course, to a much greater degree than the former. In neighboring countries with fewer tongues and far fewer dialects, language indeed has been the cause of longstanding antagonisms and of no small amount of violence. That ill feeling on this score has not brought about similar results in Switzerland is due, of course, to no special merit in the German, French, and Italian spoken by its people. On the contrary, language differences have the same disintegrating tendencies there as elsewhere, a fact which was demonstrated sufficiently in 1914. Credit for overcoming these tendencies in Switzerland belongs to other mechanisms, notably to special patriotic societies, political parties, and schools; in a less degree, to churches and military service.

Taken as a whole, the press also contributes strongly to the cause of national unity as against language differences. Nevertheless, apart from the exceptional degree of intelligence and sound judgment characterizing the journalistic output of Switzerland, it adds nothing to the process of civic training that is not common elsewhere. Hence, taken separately, it would seem to deserve a "third" or fair rating only. On the other hand, Swiss literature clearly deserves a "first" in its own right. It has contributed, not only towering figures such as Keller and Spitteler, but a host of lesser writers as well, who in all three languages and in scores of dialects have preached neutrality, peace and national unity, remolding the Swiss soul itself. The universal respect in which poets and authors are held by their fellow-countrymen is proof of the fundamental importance of the contribution they make to civic training.

Special patriotic and other societies deserve a "second" or fair rating partly because of their number and variety in every walk of life. As a mass they are commonplace enough, but the fine training in democratic methods supplied by countless small-scale social units and the habits of co-operation developed through their own federal structures are reflected everywhere in the political sphere. Because of this training, reinforced by that given through participation in local government, one finds an exceptionally large number of citizens belonging to every social class who are equipped for minor leadership at least. In addition to the great mass of more commonplace organizations existing in Switzerland two patriotic societies deserve special mention because they have devised methods well worth imitation in other countries—the Association of Swiss Citizenship Courses with its broad and well-conceived plan for mass instruction, and the New Helvetic Society, which, both in its work for Swiss residing abroad and as an academy for the higher discussion of national problems, has made contributions of the greatest value.

Government service, civil and military, to which a "second" or fair mark is given, might also be divided for the purpose of separate appraisal. Considered by itself, the civil service deserves a world's premium award for its freedom from corruption; in efficiency it rates somewhat above the average; nevertheless, so far as it is organized to look out for the interests of government employees, it is simply one among many similar associations formed by Swiss business men, workingmen, and peasants. In the latter connection, of course, it serves a class interest primarily, although by no means without due consideration for the national well-being. On the other hand, the army service is completely national in scope and purpose; it reaches virtually the whole male manhood of the country. Although employing a minimum period of time for training in the recruit school, it keeps in touch with the graduates of the latter throughout the whole course of later life by repetition courses, marksmanship requirements, and military clubs of every kind. Talk with Swiss citizens of all shades of opinion excepting only extreme radicals leaves no room for doubt as to the effectiveness of army service as a training for citizenship, a fact which is all the more remarkable considering the small amount of money and sacrifice involved. Taken by itself, therefore, military training deserves a "first" rather than a "second" grade.

Coming finally to those mechanisms which deserve a "first," no one who has observed Swiss life close at hand would question the clear title to that distinction of the manifold forms of symbolism—ceremonials, memorials, holidays, the use of flags and coats of arms, the wearing of old costumes, the cults of marksmanship, gymnastics, and singing; the cultivation of art, music, and the drama. All these things are participated in joyously by great masses of people; some of them are developed to a degree unknown elsewhere, e.g., sharpshooting, open air plays; and one is absolutely *sui generis*—the vivid and impressive ceremonial of the Landsgemeinde.

Deepened by nearly all the foregoing forms of symbolism, tradition and devotion to locality also deserve a "first." Devotion to locality is reflected in the strong home-rule sentiment found not only in the governmental structure but also in the organization of parties and in virtually all other associations of national extent. Strong centralized power is feared by the great majority of the Swiss; federalism, as they understand it, strongly counterweighted by states' rights and communal rights, is so much a part of their mentality that it must be considered complementary to their dominating loyalty to democracy, not as something opposed to it. Tradition and symbolism cast such glamor over the principle of local self-determination that it possesses quite as much of poetic as of political significance.

Least of all is there doubt that the schools of Switzerland deserve a "first" for their splendid contribution to civic training. To a much greater degree than any other of the mechanisms under consideration they place their stamp upon every individual and upon the whole mass of citizens as well. They are pre-eminent along many lines, as follows: wide popular interest in and discussion regarding methods of civic training; the excellence of language teaching, nicely calculated as it is to overcome the pull of foreign sympathies; the direct practical value of many courses and of many special commercial, industrial, agricultural, and home-economics schools; the capable interpretation of the works of national authors; the high character of homeland lore and civics textbooks; the general practice of taking children of all ages on school excursions; most of all, and above all, the fine training, devoted spirit, political independence, and popular repute of school teachers. And the results of such excellent educational institutions are manifest in every phase of Swiss life; for example, not only in industry, commerce, agriculture, the civil service, and the press, where one would expect to find them, but also, and most surprising to an American observer, in political parties and organizations affiliated with them, which with us seldom distinguish themselves by pedagogical methods of approach.

Although their qualifications to be given a "first" seem indisputable to the author, he has reserved political parties for final discussion because the weight of a great authority may be quoted against him. Bryce, in his *Modern Democracies*, observes:

> The spirit of party is weaker in Switzerland than in most democracies, the questions that divide the nation rarely rousing passion. . . . . Political organizations are less tightly knit and less actively worked than in England or the United States or Australia. . . . . The most conclusive evidence of the comparative insignificance of party organization is the absence of party funds. . . . . in no other democracy (except perhaps Norway) is there so small a class of professional politicians. . . . . Personal ambition and personal leadership in public life are less conspicuous than in any other free country.[3]

[3] Vol. I, chap. xxx, *passim*.

With certain reservations, the foregoing passages are accurate enough, regarded as characterization; yet the conclusion drawn, namely, that party is not a strong force in Switzerland, seems quite misleading. True, the spirit of party is weaker there than elsewhere, the questions that divide the nation rarely rousing passion; but is not that exactly what one would expect among a people whose approach to all the issues of life is profoundly pedagogical? While one observes few manifestations of slapstick, sensational party spirit in Switzerland (the recent efflorescence of campaign placards alone forming an exception), there is much more of cool reason and sober argument, back and forth, which in the end are more effective for national progress and less disturbing to the public peace.

The author's rebuttal would be more conclusive, perhaps, if he could stop here. In all frankness, however, it must be admitted that certain party issues which have come up in Switzerland since 1905 and 1919, the dates at which Bryce's two periods of observation terminated, have developed a quite sufficient amount of party spirit. It is only since 1919, for example, that Socialists have figured in a major rôle upon the political stage. Assuredly, their capital tax levy initiative of 1922 cut to the heart of economic interests, yet it was beaten not by party spirit but by argument. As another illustration, compare the referendum of 1920 on the question of entering the League of Nations—an issue on which every party in Switzerland took a position, followed by a nation-wide campaign of argument—with the vituperative and rancorous outburst on the same question in the United States, marred as it was by every possible unlovely manifestation of party spirit.

It is quite true, as Bryce observes, that "political organizations are less tightly knit" in Switzerland than in England, the United States, or Australia. As a matter of fact, social groupings of every sort are less tightly knit in that land of states' rights and sturdy individualism than in any of the greater centralized or even federalized countries of the world. But one may question the further remark of the distinguished English authority to the effect that Swiss parties are less actively worked than elsewhere; also, the deduction he draws from the absence of party funds, the relatively small class of professional politicians, the inconspicuousness of personal leaders and of personal ambitions. To be sure, legislators are not herded into caucus and voted by solid party blocks as in Australia; under the rule of reason, government by discussion continues to prevail in Switzerland, tempered in the last resort by the initiative and referendum. With this single exception, parties are not less actively worked in Switzerland than in the other countries named. On the contrary, they are more actively worked, with one great difference, however, namely, that they employ fewer mercenaries and less machinery, fewer great political generals but many more capable and willing lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, and privates. Since the latter are voluntary workers, large party funds are not needed; nevertheless, the work of electoral and referendum campaigns, of which there is a great deal in Switzerland, is carried on more intelligently and effectively and much more honestly than in the United States.

When one turns from rebuttal to affirmative argument, it is essential that before formulating a definite conclusion regarding the rôle played by political parties in Switzerland, one should take into account not only their own somewhat loose and decentralized structural make-up but also the numerous auxiliaries in the form of trade-unions, peasants' unions, business men's associations, and Catholic clubs which are arrayed behind them. Figuratively, it may be said that Swiss parties are spearheads, the shafts of which are grasped by many hands giving direction and impetus for attack and defense. Of course, much the same thing exists in other countries; nevertheless, the relationship—for example, that between economic groups and the Social Democratic or Peasants' parties, or between church clubs and the Catholic Conservative party—is much more direct and definite in Switzerland than are such contacts elsewhere. Of course, so close a relationship raises the question at once as to how much credit should be given parties per se, and how much to the various auxiliary groups enrolled under their banners. In Switzerland fusion has gone so far that no disentanglement of the two is possible. It may be said of the various economic and other social groups affiliated with parties that they pursue ends of their own outside the political field with no small degree of success. So far, however, as they push parties forward, they are to all intents and purposes subdivisions of the latter, pursuing the same electoral, legislative, and referendum tactics. The joint efficiency of the two combined forces, each undeniably powerful, should therefore be credited to the parties.

Of course this admittedly rather summary solution of the problem assigns a secondary rôle to business organizations in the field of civic training. That such organizations are potent has already been conceded—both the composition and the ends pursued by parties sufficiently attest the power thus wielded; nevertheless they are not so prepotent as contemporary Swiss lamentations over the *Verwirtschaftlichung* of politics would indicate. While it is true that all the economic groups of the country, whether made up of capitalists, of laborers, or of peasants, are thoroughly organized and well officered by capable professional secretaries, still so habituated have all of them become to playing the game of democratic politics that they neutralize each other's efforts to a large extent, none dominating over the rest. Finally it is evident, except to the convinced Marxist, that material interests, although growing in importance, do not crowd out the ideal social interests developed through centuries of common Helvetic life. Democracy and home rule, neutrality and peace, language, religion, and tradition still inspire Swiss hearts: it would be a sorry picture of their country indeed which did not place these, their national *Lares* and *Penates*, in the foreground.

From the foregoing point of view one must recognize Swiss parties as prime factors both in the government of the country and in civic training as well. As regards the latter function, there are other more specific reasons for the high rating assigned parties: the wide sweep of policies they propose ranging from clerical reaction to communism, the thorough discussion carried on in many lesser and in the greater annual diets, the publicity given these discussions, the educational quality of party literature, and, most striking of all, the great fabric of clubs built into their own organization for the training of leaders, for gymnastic and dramatic purposes, and for good solid political education. All the preceding activities reinforce those of a direct vote-getting character, resulting in creditably high percentages of participation both in elections and referendum votes. Finally, while Landsgemeinden belong not to the structure of parties but to that of cantonal government, it is, as a rule, either parties or groups of parties which shape the issues and bring out the attendance at these picturesque gatherings of pure democratic type. Similarly with the town meetings, unsurpassed as primary schools of local self-government, which in Switzerland are universal outside the cities. In the last analysis it is not merely the intelligence and wide sweep of Swiss parties but also the honesty characteristic of leaders and of rank and file alike which make them so effective as agents of civic training.

* * * * * * * * * *

Analysis alone, however, is not competent to solve the problem of how Swiss citizenship is formed. At best it can only evaluate separately the factors involved. Yet each of the mechanisms dealt with above is closely interlinked with all the others. Obviously the result in terms of civic training is a synthesis representing their joint contributions. Moreover this synthesis is not a thing of the last few decades only; it has behind it a direct heritage, rich in traditions and ideals, derived from more than six centuries of democratic life in common. To the Swiss above all other modern peoples, therefore, the magnificent words of Edmund Burke ring true: "the state . . . . is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born." To be sure "a partnership in all perfection" is a rather exalted conception. With their accustomed modesty the Swiss themselves deprecate high-flown phrases; they were distinctly embarrassed, for example, by the remark of a too-admiring foreigner who referred to their country as "a little contemporary Utopia." Utopians they are not, yet no people is so deeply and so consciously imbued with ideal national aims, nor so willing to work, particularly through education, to accomplish these aims.

And to all other democracies of the world Helvetic example presents a measure of instruction of such scope and richness that their admiration must go forth without stint or limit to so stanch, courageous, and laborious, so matter-of-fact and yet so idealistic, a people.

INDEX

Administration, public, 33, 37, 427
Administrative courts, 138
Agriculture, 29, 39, 55
Alcohol-free inns and restaurants, 91
Alcoholism, 228 ff.
Alphorn, 383
Altdorf *Tell* play, 390
Altheer, Paul, 329 n.
Andres, H. J., 247
Anti-masonic movement, 287
Aristocratic tradition, Swiss, 2
Aristotle, 76
Army, 143 ff., 349 ff., 427
Art, Swiss, 378 ff., 427
Association of Swiss Citizenship Courses, 274 ff., 427
Athletic associations, 97 ff., 369 ff.
August 1, celebration of, 356 ff.
Ausland-Schweizer Kommission, 268 ff.
Aydelotte, Frank, 203

Baden-Powell, Sir Robert, 283, 285 ff.
Ballads, Swiss, 324, 355
Bärndütsch-Fest, 354
Baud-Bovy, Daniel, 381
Bent, Silas, 328
Bertoni, Brenno, 199
Birth-rate in Switzerland, 242
Bordeaux, Henri, 389 n.
Bosshart, Jacob, 316
Boy Scouts, 195, 283 ff.
Bryce, Lord, 8, 13, 107, 129, 406, 424, 428
Bund, Berner, 327, 330
Burgess, J. W., 293
Buri, Max, 381
Burke, Edmund, 432
Business influence in Swiss politics, 28 ff., 44, 55, 62, 70, 226, 430
Butler, Samuel, 200

Catholic Conservative party, 15, 18, 20 ff., 48, 54, 68, 103, 153, 177, 204, 209, 218 ff., 254, 275, 281, 332, 361, 395, 409, 420
Cecil, Lord Robert, 157
Centralizing principle, 13, 16
Ceremonials, 336 ff., 427
Chalandamarz, 340
Châlets, Swiss, 244, 381
Chiesa, Francesco, 321
Children, Swiss, 246, 395
Church, Roman Catholic. *See under* Catholic Conservative party
Churches, 218 ff., 424
Civic education, 175 ff., 427
Civics courses, 212, 274 ff., 427
Civil service, 132 ff., 427
Civilian service, 153 ff.
Coats-of-arms, 244, 245, 352 ff., 427
Commerce, 32
Communes, local government, 19
Communist party, 10, 64
Compulsory voting laws, 110
Consumers' co-operatives, 105
Corruption, absence of political, 76, 137
Costumes, peasant, 353 ff., 427
Cults, Swiss, 364 ff.

Dalcroze, Jacques, 392
Death-rate in Switzerland, 242
Delaquis, E., 415 n.
Democracy, 1 ff.
Descoeudres, Alice, 144
Dialects, 187 ff., 300 ff.
Divorce-rate in Switzerland, 241
Doret, Gustave, 389
Dossenbach, Frederick, 338 n.
Drama, Swiss, 387 ff., 427
Droz, Numa, 198
Düby, Kurt, 99, 101
Dufour, General, 351
Dürr, Emil, 55, 62, 70, 133 n., 135 n., 226

Echo, Schweizer, 264, 268
Economic groups, 28 ff., 44, 55, 62, 70, 226, 430
Educational activities of parties, 78 ff.
Egger, A., 204 n.
Egli, Karl, 142 n., 146 n.
Eglisau open-air play, 393 ff.
Elections, 107 ff.
Elzingre, Henri, 200

Emigration, 264 ff.
Evangelical People's party, 225

Faesi, Robert, 325
Falke, Konrad, 14, 158, 181
Family life in Switzerland, 241 ff., 425
Federal Council, 73
Federal principle, 13, 16, 20
Federer, Heinrich, 144, 311
Festivals, 337 ff.
Feyler, Colonel F., 153 n., 155 n., 156
Fisch, Colonel K., 146 n.
Flags, 352 n., 427
Fleiner, Fritz, 210 n., 276
Folk songs, 324, 355, 384 ff.
Foreign influence and foreigners in Switzerland, 408 ff.
Forrer, Robert, 274
France, 417 ff.
Frauchiger, Friedrich, 212 n.
Freeman, E. A., 345
Freemasons, 287 ff.
Freymond, A., 138 n.
Fueter, Eduard, 8, 72, 139, 266

Gagliardi, Ernst, 417 n.
Gambling, licensed, 240 ff.
Gavitt, John P., 373 n.
Genevan Primary Teachers, Union of, 212 ff., 223
Genève, Journal de, 330
Geography teaching, 193 ff., 405
Germany, 16, 304, 319, 406, 418
Giovanoli, Fritz, 35, 58, 109 ff.
Girard, Pierre, 389
Girl Scouts, 284
Giron, Charles, 379
Gos, Charles, 148 n.
Gosnell, H. F., 108 n.
Gotthelf, Jeremias, 310, 314
Gourd, Émilie, 250 n., 254
Graubünden, myths of, 400
Greyerz, Otto von, 354 n., 384 n., 385 n.
Grimm, Robert, 82, 183 n.
Grossmann, Marcel, 180, 182
Gruetter, Frl. A. L., 276
Grütli association, 49, 98
Guggenbühl, Gottfried, 258 n.
Guntert, A., 81
Gymnasia. *See* Middle schools
Gymnastics, 368 ff., 427

Haller, A. von, 311
Hamsun, Knut, 397
Hayes, Carlton, 195
Hedler, Adolf, 160 n.
Heeb, Fr., 96 n.
Heer, J. C., 309
Heierli, Frau J., 277, 353 n.
Helvetic Society, New, 212, 256 ff., 420, 427
Herzog, H., 383 n.
His, Eduard, 130
History teaching, 183, 405
Hodler, Ferdinand, 379, 381
Hofmannsthal, Hugo von, 396
Holbein, Hans, 378, 396
Holcombe, A. N., 243 n.
Holidays, 356 ff., 427
Hombrechtikon, 196
Home rule. *See* States' rights
Homeland lore, 193 ff.
Hotel industry, Swiss, 12, 32, 240 ff.
House of Representatives, U.S., compared with Swiss National Council, 42 ff.
Howald, Jakob, 89
Hunziker, Fritz, 186

Idealism, Swiss, 11, 430 ff.
Immigration into Switzerland, 408 ff.
Independent Democratic party, 48 ff., 105, 332
Inhelder, Alfred, 221
Initiative and referendum, 95, 112 ff., 302
Inventiveness of the Swiss, 190

Jefferson, Mark, 190
Jenny, L., 288
Jesuits, 55
Jewish problem, 226 ff.
Journalism, Swiss, 326 ff., 426

"*Kantönligeist*," 406
Keller, Gottfried, 8, 76, 187, 203, 218, 247, 311, 314 ff., 322, 360 ff., 365, 381, 385, 397, 403, 407, 421 n.
Keyserling, Count von, 7
Koch, F., 141 n.
Kriesi, H. M., 360 n.
Kubick, Paul, 95

Labor unions, 79, 95
Landsgemeinden, 118 ff., 341 ff., 427
Lang, Paul, 89
Language issue in Switzerland, 16, 184 ff., 293 ff., 426

Lätt, A., 264, 271
Laur, Ernst, 66, 208
Lausanne, Gazette de, 330
Lawyers in National Council, 37, 43, 45
League of Nations, 114, 223, 284, 293, 303, 411
Léderrey, Colonel, 142 n.
Legends, Swiss, 397 ff.
Lenzburg *Jugendtagung*, 80
Lerch, E., 128
Leuch-Reineck, Annie, 252
Libraries, 323
Lienert, Meinrad, 353 n.
Literature, Swiss, 307 ff., 426
Locality, devotion to, 403 ff., 427
Lüthy, Edwin, 382 n.
Luginbühl, R., 191 n.
Lumpert, H., 307

Manufacturing, 30
Marksmanship, 151, 364 ff., 427
Maturity certificate, 182
Memorials, 345 ff.
Mencken, H. L., 10
Menn, Barthélemy, 379
Merriam, C. E., 108 n.
Meyer, Conrad Ferdinand, 309 ff., 316
Meyer, Karl, 402
Meyer, L. F., 139 n.
Michels, Robert, 38
Middle schools, 179 ff.
"Middletown," 225
Military service. *See under* Army
Mineral resources of Switzerland, 29
Moeschlin, Felix, 9, 89, 106, 269, 311, 316
Montesquieu, 129, 136
Morax, R., 311, 392
Motion pictures, 246
Motta, Giuseppe, 230, 264
Müller, Ernst, 264, 266, 267 n., 272
Music, 90, 383 ff., 427
Musical societies, 375 ff.
Mussolini, 5, 6, 10, 156, 204
Musy, Jean-Marie, 230 ff.
Myths, Swiss, 397 ff.

Nabholz, Hans, 257 n., 258
National Council, 36, 134, 152, 210, 222
National Zeitung, of Basel, 330
Nationality, Swiss, 293 ff.
Naturalization, 412 ff.
Neutrality, 158
Newspapers, Swiss, 41, 326 ff., 426
Nidwalden Landsgemeinde, 124
Nobs, Ernst, 96 n.

Odermatt, J., 228 n.
Oman, Charles, 350 ff.
Open-air plays, 387 ff., 427
Orders and decorations, foreign, 415 ff.
Ott, A., 313, 345, 390, 392

Pacifists, 152, 212 ff., 394
Participation in elections, 107 ff.
Parties, political, 48 ff., 78 ff., 92 ff., 428
Passion Play, Selzach, 395
Patents for Swiss inventions, 190
Patriotic societies, 256 ff., 426
Peasants' party, 15, 39, 54, 63 ff., 95 ff.
People's Houses, 91
People's Universities, 179
Pestalozzi, 170, 171, 245
Peter, Marc, 402 n.
Picot, Albert, 154 n.
Pilori, 227
Plato, 270
Politische Rundschau, 96
Poor relief, 19
Porret, J. P., 310
Posters, political, 382
Prayer Day, Swiss, 359 ff.
Press, Swiss, 326 ff., 426
Pro Juventute, 272 ff.
Professions, liberal, 33, 41
Proportional representation, 34, 52 ff., 73
Public Officials' Act, 139 ff.

Radio in Socialist educational work, 90
Ragaz, Leonhard, 12, 240, 333 n.
Railroads, 30, 32
Rameru, M. de, 302 n.
Ramuz, C. F., 311
Rappard, William E., 118, 306 n.
Recruit examinations, 158 ff., 173
Referendum. *See* Initiative and referendum
Reformation, Protestant, 218, 296, 378
Regeneration period, 2, 6, 172
Reinhard, Ernst, 62, 81 n.
Renan, Ernst, 294
Reynold, Gonzague de, 117, 307, 310
Rod, Eduard, 218 n., 310 ff.
Rolland, Romain, 317 n.

Roman Catholic church. *See* Catholic Conservative party
Rote Revue, 96
Ruchti, J., 134 n., 305 n., 410 n.
Ruhlmann, P. M., 160 n.
Ruskin, John, 381
Rütli, 401, 407
Ryffel, H., 123 n.

Sagas, Swiss, 383, 397 ff.
SATUS (Swiss Workers' Gymnastic and Sport Association), 99 ff.
Schäfer, Wilhelm, 293, 299, 406
Schenker, Ernst, 79
Schiller, Friedrich, 390
Schools, 171 ff., 428
Schrag, Arnold, 283, 286
Schweizer Echo, 268
Schweizerbanner, 227
Sechseläuten, 339
Secretaries, professional, 33, 39 ff., 134
Segantini, Giovanni, 380
Seippel, Paul, 144, 300, 305, 306 n.
Selzach *Passion Play*, 395 ff.
Senti, Dr. A., 108
Shaw, Bernard, 7
Shooting Society, Swiss, 364 ff.
Singing societies, 375 ff., 427
Social Democratic party, 10, 15, 23 ff., 49, 63, 78 ff., 97 ff., 133, 139, 177, 204, 209, 212, 223, 254, 275, 332, 361
Sonderbund, 144, 219
Spitteler, Carl, 260, 304, 314, 317 ff., 322
Sport organizations, 97 ff., 364 ff.
Sprecher, Theophil von, 244
Staatsbürger, Der, 281, 327
States' rights sentiment, 13, 16, 280, 403, 427
Steinemann resolutions, 100
Steinmann, E., 95, 96 n.
Strickler, Robert, 196
Subventions, federal, 17
Summer schools, 86, 250
Swiss Workers' Education Central, 81 ff.
Symbolism, Swiss, 336 ff., 427
Symonds, John Addington, 245, 266 n., 371

Tagwacht, Berner, 330
Tax-dodging, 173
Teachers, Swiss, 42, 153, 156, 171 ff., 205 ff., 428
Tell, Wilhelm, 390, 392, 397, 399, 400, 401
Thilo, Ernst, 283, 286
Toller, Ernst, 90
Town meetings, 125 ff.
Traber, Alfred, 89
Trade-unions, 79, 95
Traditions, Swiss, 397 ff., 427
Transportation, 32
Traz, Robert de, 148 n.
Treichler, H., 89

Uri Landsgemeinde, 119

Vandervelde, 7
Vaterland, of Luzern, 330
Vela, Vincenzo, 379
Vorwärts, Basler, 330

Wealth, per capita, of Switzerland, 4; display of, 336
Weber, Ernst, 98
Weber, J., 264, 269, 341 n.
Weilenmann, H., 294 ff.
Wettstein motion, 175 ff.
Wettstein, O., 210
Widmann, J. V., 313
Wiget, Th., 216
Wildbolz, Eduard, 244 n.
Wilhelm II, 336, 352
Wille, Ulrich, 147, 157, 350
Wine Growers' Festival, 230, 269, 387 ff.
Winkelried, Arnold, 401
Woman suffrage, 247 ff.
Workers' Bicycle Union of Switzerland, 99 ff.
Workers' stages (*Arbeiterbühnen*), 89
Working class, 42, 99 ff.
World War, 157, 166, 259, 267, 286, 304, 413
Wyler, Eugen, 312, 317, 343 ff.
Wyss, A., 281 n.
Wyss, Johann Rudolf, 385

Yodeling, 383
Youth Leagues, 191 n.
Youth Shelters, League for, 195, 373 ff.

Zahn, Ernst, 311, 391 n.
Zellweger, Ed., 264
Zofingia, 204
Zollinger, Max, 186

PRINTED IN U·S·A·

DATE DUE

MAR 10 1979
APR 18 1979
APR 3 1983
MAR 30 1983
JUN 23 1984
JUN 9 1984
DEC 1 [illegible] 1989
JAN 5 1990
JUL 23 1991
OCT -7 1991

261-2500

Printed in USA

[illegible]

112817

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
Library
VICTORIA, B.C.